

BISHOP REGINALD HEBER

(1783-1826)

POET - PREACHER - CHURCHMAN

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By courtesy of Brig. Heber-Percy of Hodnet.

REV. REGINALD HEBER

1783-1826

The young Rector of Hodnet, afterwards Bishop of Calcutta.

To
LEE and E.K.
for
Unflagging Encouragement.

Foreword

This thesis, a biographical study of Reginald Heber, (1783-1826), emphasizes his ability as a poet, as a preacher and as a churchman. He is best known today through several of his hymns which possess qualities that have endeared them to many generations of worshipping Christians around the globe. Less well known is the fact that he was the second Lord Bishop to the See of Calcutta with all British India and Australia as his diocese. Reginald Heber, the son of an English country squire and rector, was born near the end of the eighteenth century, in which a sleepy torpor seemed established by precedent. His boyhood years, the first quarter of his short and active life, were spent in the golden decade of peace which followed the end of the American Revolutionary War; while his adolescent years and early manhood were lived in a Britain reacting to the challenge of the French Revolution and its Dictator-product, Napoleon Bonaparte. Heber came to the fullness of his powers at a time when his country was seeking to make its adjustment to the post-war problems and the results of its rapid industrial growth. In this pre-reform period, he served the Church of England in the East Indian possessions as a tolerant, statesmanlike Bishop. To show the development of Reginald Heber, with his gracious character, liberal viewpoint, scholarly learning and deep spirituality, as expressed through his poetry, his preaching and churchmanship in the service of the Church he loved, against the

background of these interesting and tumultuous years, has been my aim.

In some areas of Reginald Heber's life there is ample primary source material. He retained copies of a large part of his correspondence and, during his extensive travels, he maintained copious journals. This mass of material, along with his hymns, poems, and a selection of his sermons, were published posthumously by his wife. Subsequent biographies worked these riches. It remained for George Smith, C.I.E., L.L.D., of Edinburgh, to give a more objective approach to the life of "Bishop Heber, Poet and Chief Missionary to the East, Second Lord Bishop of Calcutta, 1783-1826"; and to discover the Dod correspondence, written by Reginald to his good friend, Charlotte Dod. Written in 1895, it is the definitive biography of Reginald Heber. The early half of his life's record is quite incomplete in all the Heber biographies. One cannot read any of these studies of this fascinating personality without regretting this deficiency. Dr. Smith, commenting on the two volumes, quarto size, "Life of Reginald Heber, D.D." by Amelia Heber, wrote, "In these, the most lovable and the most laborious of all English gentlemen and missionaries lies buried". The beloved prelate's life can stand the closest scrutiny, but the bereaved widow tended to "de-humanize" her husband's life in favour of all the spiritual aspects which it possessed. A study of his formative years gives new perspective to an appreciation of his personality and character.

The 3rd of April, 1951, marked the one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of his death. The challenge to learn about Reginald Heber's early life; to add new facts to his biography; and to see him as a living human figure has constantly motivated me in this research. I have been most fortunate in having had made available to me the MS. Letters which Reginald wrote to his life-long friend, John Thornton, and a number of other Heber family MS. letters.

Examination of the Thornton letters has revealed the careful editing of them done by Amelia Heber before she included them in the life of her husband. Much of the editing was of an unimportant personal nature, but, in some cases, in this deleted material I have found some interesting comments and sidelights on Heber's thought. "The Heber Letters", very recently edited and published by R.H.Cholmondeley, has furnished a number of valuable references to the early life of Reginald and his family. Other memoirs and records have been published since Smith's "Bishop Heber", and they have made their contribution to this study. I, too, must acknowledge my indebtedness to the original Heber books edited by Mrs.Heber; from them I have made frequent quotations. My approach to the study of the noted cleric is different from any of the others in several respects; and, in the evaluation of his contribution as a Bishop, I believe I have been enabled to make a more objective estimate.

Besides the academic interest in the life of Reginald Heber and his associates, which I have found deeply interesting, there has been a personal interest in the subject. His hymn, "From Greenland's Icy Mountains", has long been a favourite of mine, and his morning hymn of praise, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty", is an outstanding Chapel favourite with the members of the Corps of the New Mexico Military Institute, Roswell, New Mexico, U.S.A., where I serve as Chaplain and member of the faculty. During an overseas assignment with the U.S. Army Air Force, in 1945-1946, I became well acquainted with Calcutta, India, the site of Heber's bishopric, as I served as Chaplain at two of our Air Force bases (Dum Dum and Barrackpore) located a short distance from the city. In line with duties there one Sunday evening, I took a bus load of G.I's in to the city for an evening service at St. Paul's Cathedral. Following the vespers, one of the clergy conducted us around the Cathedral and explained the various memorial tablets and monuments. Standing beside the impressive white marble statue of Bishop Heber at the head of the centre aisle, he briefly told us something about his life. Then, with a whimsical smile, he added, "You know the Bishop was a great lover of music, and our choir has the traditional belief that at some rehearsals, when the anthem has been particularly well sung, they have heard the Bishop boom out an audible "Amen". We smiled and chuckled as we left the presence of the statue. Yet, in completing this study of

the life of Bishop Reginald Heber, I inwardly hope that I, like the choir, may hear an "Amen" of approval.

I am deeply indebted to many who have made the gathering of material and the writing of this thesis possible. The Right Reverend Hugh Watt, D.D., D.Litt., Moderator of the Church of Scotland, first suggested the study of Reginald Heber to me. To him and to my supervisors, the Reverend Professor John Burleigh, B.D., and the Reverend Professor William Manson, D.D., my gratitude for their helpfulness and encouragement is hereby given. My sincere thanks are expressed to Dr.G.L.Thornton, C.B.E., M.C., T.D.; to Mr.Richard H. Cholmondeley; and to Brigadier A.G.W.Heber-Percy, D.S.O., Grenadier Guards, for their generous permission to refer to and to quote from MS. letters and documents belonging to Bishop Heber and John Thornton, now in the possession of their families.

Friendly help was received from the present Rector of Hodnet, the Rev.W.V.G.Griffiths, M.A., Hon.C.F.; the Rev.Guy Hephher, M.A., Rector of Malpas; the Principal of Brasenose College, Oxford, H.M.Last Esq., M.A.; Sir Edmund Craster, D.Litt., of All Souls College, Oxford; Sir John Murray, K.C.V.O., D.S.O.; and the Right Reverend Richard Dyke Acland, D.D., Bishop of Bombay (retired), and is gratefully acknowledged. Specialized assistance in connection with Heber's hymns was received from Professor H.Augustine Smith, Ph.D., School of Music, Boston University; James Camp, B.Mus., Westminster Choir College,

Princeton University; the Rev.Dr.Lowther Clarke, Chichester Cathedral; the Rev.V.G.Aston, Penkull Vicarage, Stoke-on-Trent, and a number of friends in the U.S.A.

The Librarian and staff members of the several libraries I have consulted have assisted me in many ways. The Rev.J.B. Primrose, M.A., Librarian, and Miss Erna R.Leslie, M.A., B.Com., of the New College Library, University of Edinburgh, have rendered valuable assistance on a number of occasions; Miss Marjorie S.Holland, F.L.A., Librarian, and Mrs.Muriel Landers, B.A., Archivist, of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Library, London, have also been most helpful. To these and to the innumerable unnamed assistants at the Edinburgh Public Library; the National Scottish Library; the University of Edinburgh Library; the Brasenose College Library, Oxford University; the British Museum; the Church House Library, London; and the New Mexico Military Institute Library, Roswell, N.M., U.S.A., who have filled my many requests with alacrity and a smile, I extend my cordial thanks.

Recognition must also be made to Professor Richard M. Cameron, Ph.D., Boston University, School of Theology; R.Shackleton, M.A., and S.H.Smith of Brasenose College, Oxford; V.J.Lefever, Dean's Verger, St.Paul's Cathedral, London; and Mrs Jean Walsh, for their part in the furtherance of this project. To the assistant typists, to Mrs.Rachel Ayre, typist, and my wife, who has served as proof-reader, there is a special acknowledgment necessary for their unfailing good-humour and efficiency.

In conclusion, I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to the Board of Regents of the New Mexico Military Institute, and its President, Brigadier General Hugh M. Milton II, who arranged for my leave of absence from that institution to engage in and complete this project.

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Chapter One

CHILDHOOD AT MALPAS 1783-1791

Chapter One

CHILDHOOD AT MALPAS 1783 - 1791.

The Treaty of Paris in 1783 ended the War of American Independence and created a new relationship between Great Britain and her former American Colonies in the West. In Europe peace was secured for a while to the English, French and Spanish in the Treaty of Versailles. Half-way across the globe, Warren Hastings was engaged in saving British power in the East where by a long series of brilliant victories the Tippoo, Sultan of Mysore, was brought to submission. At the end of this memorable year Charles James Fox introduced his famous Bill for the Government of India which proposed boldly to transfer the whole political powers of the East India Company to the Crown, and led to his political downfall and the installing of young Pitt as Premier by George III. With Pitt was to come to power a whole new set of ruling Tory families, mostly risen by their wits from the professional and mercantile classes and from the smaller gentry with whom some of the outstanding Whig families were to join forces. It seemed as if a golden and peaceful period was to bless English national life at home and abroad. Actually it was only a lull in the wars which had been convulsing the civilised world from Boston in the western world to Benares in the East - a lull like that which comes just before a cyclone strikes. A few years of peace, no more than ten, for rest and renewal of national strength was ahead, before the cyclone force of the French "Revolution" was to break upon the Continent. It was

just at this moment, then, between two crowded periods of international and almost world-wide warfare, at the close of one and before the beginning of the other, that in a quiet country rectory in the vale of Cheshire, Reginald Heber was born.

On 21st April, 1783, the Lord of the Manor of Hodnet, Salop, and co-rector of Malpas, Cheshire, interrupted the activities of the morning to share some exciting news with his sisters, Elizabeth and Ammy, in distant London:-

I take the very first opportunity of acquainting my dear friends that my dear Mary was, a little after three this morning, safely delivered of a fine little lad. I thank God she and little Bab are both as well as can be expected. He is as fat as a little mole and they say looks very well.

A week later another letter followed:-

I have the inexpressible satisfaction to acquaint you that my dearest Mary (I thank God) has rested extremely well these two last nights. Would you think it, she is monstrously fond of the little brat and thinks him very pretty indeed; for my part though I don't think him an ugly boy, yet I cannot as yet descry the number of beauties his Mama sees in him. His eyes are at present a dark blue but whether they will assume a different colour as dear Richard's I know not. He is, they say, a tall child. ¹

Both of these excerpts reveal the normal reaction of parents in welcoming an offspring but in this instance the father was a man of middle years, fifty-five to be exact. He had been married previously to Mary Baylie, co-heiress

1. Cholmondeley, R.H. - The Heber Letters pp.16 & 18.

of the Rev. Martin Baylie, rector of Wrentham in Suffolk, who died soon after bearing an infant son, Richard Heber. It was not until the lad was eight that the widowed father on 30th July, 1782, married Mary Allanson, eldest daughter of the Rector of Wath in Yorkshire. Mary who at thirty years of age had exchanged the role of spinster loneliness for one of married happiness lavished her love on her first born who was to be named after his father Reginald, a favoured name in the honourable history of the Heber family.

The Heber family came originally from Yorkshire. The name of a Reginald Heber of Marton and his pedigree appears in the return of the principal gentlemen of the West Riding of Yorks at the Visitation of 1585. He was the son of Thomas Heiber, who possessing lands at Keytheley and at Elslach had purchased the estate of West Marton in Craven. His father whose name was spelled Thomas Heibire is known to have been living in Craven as early as 1461. The family name was at one time pronounced Hayber from an ancient fortified hill in the neighbourhood. This explanation is advanced by Thomas D. Whitaker in his study of the families of this area as published in 1805.¹ It is interesting to note that, which because of evidence

1 Whitaker, Thomas - The History and Antiquities of the Deanery of Craven in the County of York. p.67.

must be termed a coincidence, the first rector of Marton in October 1249 bore the name of de Ebor. While more than a century later there was another rector with a similar family name, we have no evidence suggesting any linkage other than an homonymic one. The family records from the fifteenth century reveal the three favourite male names as Reginald, Richard, and Thomas. In time all three were borne by sons of the Heber family then resident in Malpas.

The infant was christened on a weekday late in June, with two clergymen, his uncle Rev. George Allanson, and a first cousin of his father's, another Rev. Reginald Heber, Rector of Marton, and his aunt, Miss Elizabeth Heber, for his godparents. Miss Allanson was the proxy for Miss Heber and the Curate of the Malpas church stood for Mr. Allanson. The ceremony was performed around the font of St.Oswald's. This was the church where young Reginald was to receive his formal religious training and to learn to "worship God in the spirit of holiness". A fine example of the enriched Gothic of the period of Henry VII, it was later to be restored and to have installed in it a rich east window in memory of the notable accomplishments of the Rector's son whose name was to bear international fame. The Malpas Church at this time possessed two Rectors - each alternating the weekly services - Dr.Thomas Townson, a profound but retiring scholar, enjoyed the benefice of the Lower Medietiy while the Rev. Reginald

Heber held the Upper Medietty of Malpas. This he had acquired in 1770 in exchange for the living of Chelsea which he had held for four years following his years at Brasenose College, Oxford, where he had been a Fellow of the College and a Tutor after his student days. In plurality with Malpas he became also the Rector of Hodnet in 1787. In his capacity as Lord of the Manor he presented this living to himself.

Of primary importance in the development of the character and personality of a young child are the parents and the home atmosphere which they create for its nurture. In this respect young Reginald was most fortunate with loving parents who early showed him the way he should grow in love and favour with God and man. Mary gave generously of her mild sweet disposition to her first born, one of the distinguishing elements of his personality by which he drew and held so many friendships in his tragically short span of life. Like the most revered of Marys she was to outlive her son and was to have occasion in later years to recall some of the incidents by which he revealed the confidence in God which had been shown him by his parents. One of these anecdotes treasured by her occurred when he was travelling with his parents in a very stormy day, across the mountainous country between Ripon and Craven; his mother was much alarmed, and proposed to leave the carriage and walk,

when the laddie, sitting on her knee, lifting his confident face to hers said, "Do not be afraid Mamma, God will take care of us." This simplicity and sincerity of confidence was to be nourished and would sustain him in all the valleys of depression and grief through which he was to pass. Dr. George Smith has succinctly phrased this development of his spiritual life:-

From the first dawning of intelligence, and all through the forty-three years of his life as child, youth, and man, as student, pastor, and bishop, Reginald Heber showed the same 'gracious' character and mental activity, redeemed from priggishness and vanity by a humble fear of God and a joyous delight in whatsoever things are lovely and of good report.¹

It was this experience of his faith which Heber had in mind when later in life discussing John Wesley's account of the new light received from the Moravian Boehler, that faith must be "instantaneous" that Heber wrote of conversion:-

With the term instantaneous we have no disposition to quarrel. A man must begin to believe at some time or other; and if the truths of Christianity are first impressed on his heart after he arrives at years of discretion, he may, beyond a doubt, remember in certain cases the very day and hour in which he first received conviction.....The only danger is lest, by making that circumstance a necessary mark of conversion which was, in fact, only an incidental accompaniment of it, we should presumptuously confine the grace of God to a single mode of operation, and exclude from our scheme that which is, probably, the most common of all His dispensations, wherever the seed sown at baptism grows up thenceforth, through the means of education and example and by the continually

1 Smith, George - Bishop Heber p.9.

renewed though silent influences of that spirit by whom we were then first sanctified.¹

But let no one think that life in the Malpas Rectory was a narrowly prescribed one for its occupants. From the letters of the family which have survived through the years they appear as vigorous and good-humoured people well able to enjoy life in this golden period of peace. As Squire of the Manor, the Rector annually arranged for the celebration of Master Richard's birthday by all the neighbouring gentry and the many servants of the Manor. We have a delightful picture of this festive occasion which was celebrated on the 5th January 1785, Richard's eleventh birthday, and when his half brother was not quite two years old. As Richard was away at school near London, his father described the affair in these lines:-

You would all I make no doubt be quite happy on the fifth which you may be sure your friends at Malpas made a day of rejoicing and festivity as usual, with singing, music and dancing. The menials footed it in the laundry and the gentry in the gallery: little Tiddy (young Reginald) was at first somewhat astonished to see the dancers whisking about like so many crazelings but soon became exhilarated, entered into the spirit of the fun and trolled about like a little fairy by moonlight.²

Near the end of the same month the Rector describes to his

1 The Quarterly Review - October 1820. Vol.XXIV, p.22.

2 Cholmondeley, R.H. - The Heber Letters, p.29.

sister a gala evening which he and his wife had spent at Wynnstay. They were much entertained by the play "As You Like It" and enjoyed the gathering of the gentry which had assembled at the invitation of Sir Watkins Williams Wynn. He comments, "Sir Watkins did me the honour to recognise me." This acquaintance of the two families was to deepen into the friendship of Sir Watkins' heir, Charles, and Reginald, the son of the Squire, and as an instrument of Providence, Charles was, in later years, to invite Reginald to go to India as Second Lord Bishop. But the importance of this connection of the two families was beyond the wildest imaginings of the Squire who had other things on his mind then - a hint of this we find in a closing paragraph of his cheery letter, and it also provides us with a good glimpse of the Rector and his wife:

Would you believe it! tho' we did not leave Wynnstay till after twelve o'clock I and my pregnant Lady came home to Malpas that night or rather that morning where we arrived safe and sound at about half past three, eat each an egg upon a toast, drank a glass of negus (hot sweetened wine and water) and got to bed about four, went to our bye and kept at our bye till eleven the next day and (God be thank'd) have neither of us found any bad effects from the enterprize.¹

On 21st March, 1785, Mary gave birth to a second son who was to be named Thomas Cuthbert, after his paternal and maternal grandfathers. With less than two years' difference between

1 Ibid. p.30.

their ages Reginald or Tiddy as his father fondly called him early began to look after Tommy and the two brothers developed a close friendship from those childhood days. These two were joined by a baby sister born on 3rd March, 1787, who was to be baptized Mary, after her mother. With this addition to the Rector's family their menage was complete and although there was a difference of twenty-four years in the parents' ages and Richard, born of the first marriage was almost nine years older than his next closest brother, there is no evidence that these discrepancies in age caused any strain on the family ties. On the contrary it was an ideal family united by the love each shared for the other and manifested in the activities of each. Especially is this evident as the children grew older and the age differences became less marked. Richard came in time to have a contributing influence on the education of his brothers when they followed in his steps at Brasenose College, where the Rector had achieved a place for himself and earlier members of the family had attended.

In these earliest years in the life of Reginald the influence of the parents was strongest along with the social unity of the close-knit family itself. Both parents took an interest in the formal as well as the informal education of the children, and the contribution of both is to be clearly noted in the subsequent life of the one who became a favourite with his Oxford contemporaries and was to be acknowledged as a "bright and shining ornament" of the Church of England.

His early childhood was distinguished by mildness of disposition, obedience to his parents, consideration for the feelings of those around him, and by that trust in God's providence which formed, through life, so prominent a part of his character.¹

The guidance of his mother and relations with his brothers and sister point the way to humility, unselfishness, tolerance and simplicity of spirit which strongly marked his character.

These are facets of his shining saintliness yet they were only part of the characteristic Heber spirit. There was a strength of purpose, a tenacity in upholding that which he believed to be right, a regard for authority and a hatred of faction which are all to be clearly revealed in his career. These seemingly opposing qualities were all fused into his sterling character so that he shone forth with a brilliance in all that he accomplished. It was this very mixture - the contribution of the Mother and the Father - which accounts, I believe, for the several moments of indecision which are found in critical hours in his life.

Reginald's father as we have noted occupied a dual relationship to the village of Hodnet after 1787 where he was Lord of the Manor and Rector of the Church; he was co-rector at the living of Malpas, fifteen miles away and in 1803 he became absentee Lord of the Manor to the village of Marton in

1 Heber, Amelia - The Life of Reginald Heber, D.D.
Vol.I, p.2.

Craven, Yorks. In many ways he resembled the country Squires of the age, concerned with looking after his property, raising his family and providing for their future, travelling little beyond an occasional visit up to London or to one of the watering places, and supporting the Tory party firmly in all matters. Reginald Senior had the advantage of more education than was common to country Squires. He had studied at Manchester School before matriculating at Brasenose College, Oxford, where he took a scholarship in 1746, was ordained seven years later upon completion of his M.A. degree, and was elected a Fellow of the College, becoming a Tutor in 1756. This position he continued to hold for ten years before resigning to become Rector of Chelsea. These years of the University of Oxford's history, writes George M. Trevelyan, were "in a slumberous period when it made very little pretence of fulfilling its functions." That is true, but there were some for whom it fulfilled its function. The Senior Heber was of this group and not like the usual ones which the Rev. Thomas Scott described as fellow candidates with him for ordination in 1772:-

The remainder are Oxonian and Cantabrigian bucks, who know more of the wine and the girls of their respective universities, and of setting dogs, racehorses and guns in the country, than of Latin or Greek, or divinity.¹

The position achieved at Brasenose by the Senior Heber is an

1 Scott, John - Life of Rev. Thomas Scott, p.35.

indication of his seriousness and application to studies even though the general educational level of the University was not high.

It was with renewed interest in teaching that the former college Tutor sought to implant the rudiments of a classical education and knowledge of the Holy Bible in the mind of young Reginald. Rarely has a father had the intense joy of seeing such educational seeds grow into fullness and bear fruit within his lifetime as did the Squire of Hodnet. These efforts of the father were sown in the particularly fertile soil of the young son's intellectual capabilities. He became, as his older brother fondly described him, "an omnivorous reader", and this appetite for reading remained with him for all his years. He possessed a fertile imagination and a most retentive memory, one which today would be termed "photographic".

At almost a single glance his eye embraced the contents of a whole page; and these were so strongly impressed upon his memory, that, years after, he was able to repeat the substance of what he then read; while such passages as more particularly struck him, were attentively perused once, and remembered through life with verbal accuracy.¹

His mind was an active one. As a child he was inquisitive, always eager to obtain instruction, never hesitating to ask the opinions of others, but with such a modesty of manner and

1 Heber, Amelia - The Life of Reginald Heber, D.D.
Vol.I. p.5.

evident sincerity in his search for knowledge that he was ensured the attention of those with whom he conversed. His father's library was a small one and it became a treat for him to visit the study of the co-rector, Dr. Townson, where in company with the old scholar he could peruse the books and engravings which intrigued his interest.

Reginald could read the Bible with fluency at five years of age. His father had placed the complete edition of it in his young hands, in preference to any abridgement of it, in order that he might become more familiar with the beauty of its language and the importance of its teachings. His memory enabled him fully to profit by this plan; and its effects were evident through his youth and manhood. The intimate knowledge of the Bible was a distinguishing characteristic of his scholarly and spiritual life. Parallel to this side of his intellectual development was a strong love for the classics which his father had implanted within him. He started to learn Latin when but six years old to while away the hours of convalescence following a severe attack of typhus fever. His first literary production was a translation of the fables of Phaedrus into verse when only seven.

From the "Heber Letters", we learn that

Tiddy and Tommy both attended Church this morning (24th February 1790) to say their catechism with the other boys, and Mary went to hear them, being the first time of her appearance in the Congregation.

In the summer of that year the family went to Parkgate, on the

coast, twenty-seven miles from Malpas. All except Richard (who was at Greenford preparing under the direction of Dr. Samuel Glasse for his entrance to Oxford) enjoyed the sea air, and the bathing.

Another of the brilliant facets of Reginald Heber's personality was the poetic skill which he revealed to the world in "Palestine" written at Oxford and the numerous hymns which have won enduring fame for his name. It is in the light of these accomplishments that the following unpublished letter found in the possession of Mr. R. H. Cholmondeley, Baschurch, Shropshire, provides us with a very early use of verse by Tiddy. The letter unfortunately is undated but from the context and the childish expressions, it appears that it was written before Reginald went off to Whitchurch in 1792. Probably he was six or seven years old when contemplation of a toy weather barometer stirred the Muse within him.

To Mrs. Heber, Hodnet Hall

My dear Mama, I am extremely glad to hear that dear Tommy and Mary are better, and I hope you are well yourself. I am very well myself. I hope Tommy liked his Potato. I hope Tommy will like the things I sent for him and Mary, I hope tomorrow they will be better than they are today.

I hope the toys Poppa sent for from Chester, old Derby will divert them with Joan his wife, the plague of his life.

When Joan appears it will be fair
When Derby comes of rain beware
Of rairyphews this is most rare,
And will make Tom and Mary stare.

With love to dear Tommy and Mary

I am my dear Mama
Your affectionate son, Reg. Heber.¹

An unpublished letter which remains in the possession of the Cholmondeley branch of the family written by the almost nine year old Reginald from Malpas to his older brother Richard at Oxford furnishes us with a glimpse of the mature expression which he possessed early in his life and with it a delightful touch of the light humour which was ever to add sparkle to his personality.

Malpas, Jany 28, 1792.

Dear Brother,

I hope you are very well and like Oxford. I hope you left Aunts well at Westminster. You are charged by Uncle who is now here and Aunt Jet, with purloining a folio volume of his Corpus Poetarum and if you don't bring it down with you next summer, you and Mr. John as an accomplice in the theft will be sent to Botany Bay. Doctor Townson our good friend has been much indisposed but we now hope he is better. We all join in love to you - I am to go to School after Easter but let me be where I will I shall remain your ever

Affectionate
Reg. Heber.²

To Richard Heber Esq.,
Braze-Nose College
Oxford.

This letter is one of the early references to the book collecting propensities of Richard which was to make him the possessor of the largest personal library in the nineteenth century. It became the great passion of his life engaging increasingly more of his time and his fortune until his death in 1833.

1 Cholmondeley Collection - MS.Letter.

2 Ibid.

Chapter Two

SCHOOL YEARS 1791-1800

Chapter Two

SCHOOL YEARS 1791 - 1800.

In the decade between the American war and the war of the French Revolution the prosperity and prestige of the British Empire increased thanks in no small measure to the sober genius of young William Pitt who excelled as a Minister of peace and recovery. Shaken finances were re-established; trade and manufactures were encouraged by a systematic reduction of the chaos of indirect taxes. Pitt solved the Indian problem which had caused the downfall of Fox's ministry, by a compromise between Crown and Company which worked quietly for the next seventy-four years. Under his plan the commercial monopolies and functions of the Company remained untouched but its political authority was to be "controlled" by a "Board of Control" appointed by the Crown, and representing the British Cabinet of the day, with the power of supervising the correspondence between the Company and its servants in India. In a master stroke the Governor-General was made despotic in the East where that approach was understood and at the same time he was held subordinate to the British Parliamentary Cabinet at home. During these years steps were taken to establish a colony in Botany Bay, New Holland as Australia was then known. Other steps were taken to aid in the establishment of the American Loyalists who, expelled from the United States, migrated into the eastern and western parts of Canada.

In England, Pitt, after three times having his Reform Bill which would have effected certain mild parliamentary reforms

(i.e. abolished a few of the rotten boroughs and increased the county representation) turned down, dropped his efforts. Fox warmly espoused the abolition of the Test and Corporation Acts which debarred Dissenters and Roman Catholics from civil rights. It was at this very time that the storming of the Bastille on 14th July, 1789, told the world that the greatest nation in Europe was now in revolution. The stagnant calm of the eighteenth century was shattered. The foundation of the social beliefs on which public order depended was no longer acceptable to the French. France, the most powerful nation in Europe, with three times the population of England had been reduced to chronic impotence after the aggressive and extravagant reign of Louis XIV. The ruling class had become anaemic and effete; the middle-class bankers, merchants and lawyers were ambitious but could not effect any equalisation of the taxation which bore so heavily upon them and the backs of the frugal, hard-working peasant class. The dead hand of the past lay heavy on all.

In the King's speeches of 1789 and 1790 Pitt carefully avoided any stress on the disorders in France, expressing the hope that all struggle would ultimately be resolved into the kind of liberty enjoyed by England. But in the autumn of 1790 Edmund Burke published his "Reflections on the Revolution", in which he analysed the divergence between French rhetoric and practice, pointing to the central weakness of the French philosophy - its failure to recognize the existence of religion and morality. Within a year it had sold 32,000 copies which listed

it as a "best-seller" of the time. The Rector of Hodnet and Malpas sent to his booksellers for a copy of this book which, he comments, "everybody reads and I hear everybody but your Prices (Rev. Richard Price) and Priestleys (Dr. Joseph Priestley, theologian and scientist) and rank Republicans and King-Killers approves." A few weeks later he writes to his sister in

London,

Tell my dear Richard if he has not read Burke's book he has a great pleasure to come. I have perused it with uncommon pleasure and admiration and think it a capital performance. Having truth for its basis, sound sense and argument in its composition and fine classic language for its embellishment"¹

This was high praise for the Tory Rector to bestow on the eloquent Whig, but as the French Revolution developed into mob rule, the sympathy of the educated Englishman was stayed and repressed. The liberal tide which had been flowing in England since the American war, began to ebb rapidly. The reply to Burke's "Reflections" came from the pen of Tom Paine whose First Part of "The Rights of Man" appeared in February 1791. This stated the full democratic thesis - that government is derived from the people, can be altered at their will, and must be carried on for their benefit, through a system of popular representation. When the Second Part was published a year later with its claims that both Monarchy and House of Lords should be abolished with the country governed by its representatives alone, the feeling of the people was too hot and the

1 Cholmondeley, R.H. - The Heber Letters, p.61.

fear of the French Revolution too great to allow any consideration of its claims. It was suppressed and Paine fled for his life to France.

Such were the feelings and temper of the times when Reginald left home in the fall of 1791 as a slight lad of eight to begin his formal education. Whitchurch, a larger town sixteen miles north from Hodnet, had a grammar school under the mastership of a Dr. Kent. Here the Rector's son was to continue his classical studies. We have very little definite knowledge concerning the three years he spent in this school. Smith makes only a sentence comment of it and Amelia Heber mentions that on one occasion he remained in the school-room long after class was out because he was so completely absorbed in a new book he had acquired, thus illustrating the perfect power of concentration of which his mind was capable. However, from the recently published "Heber Letters" it is possible to glean four more tiny facts concerning his activities in this unknown period of his school life. In two letters of the Rector to Richard he gives intimate glimpses of how young Reginald, like other lads of his age and station in the community, reacted to the national and international affairs which were engaging the attention of all England.

29 December 1792 - Mama went to Whitchurch to fetch Reginald home on Sunday evening on account of the sickness that he complained of. It was lucky for him he came home as he thereby avoided getting into a scrape with some of his school-fellows, who according to the prevailing Rage of the Times of standing up for the Rights of Boys,

adopted Tom Paine's principles and doctrines and rebelled against King Kent, who however soon taught the young insurgents who barred him out of the school on Monday morning that he had a prerogative to maintain, and by cutting off all supplies of provisions soon reduced the Rebel Garrison by famine to surrender at discretion to their rightful Sovereign. So may all Rightful Monarchs ever prevail against Levellers and Republicans, the pests of Society.

5 January 1893 - Loyalty triumphs in every corner of the Kingdom. Tom Paine was first shot through and through and then burnt in effigy at Malpas Cross on Wednesday, and a Band of Music pervades every street, playing and singing 'God Save Great George Our King' and Mr. Heaton says there was not a housekeeper in the town however indigent, who did not contribute his mite to testify their loyalty and love of their King and the Constitution of their Country, and their utter abhorrence and detestation of Republicans and Levellers and disturbers of the Public Peace!

Tiddy, Tom and Missy amused themselves yesterday in dressing up two figures to represent Tom Paine and Demourrier which they carried about stuck up on their hunting poles all day long, and in the evening suspended them from the balustrade at the top of the stairs, where they are still hanging.¹

Despite his energy of the previous day, Tiddy continued to remain at home enjoying his mother's care and home food until the end of the month when he returned to school.

France declared war on England on February 1st. Pitt in his royal message to Parliament ten days later declared that the King had taken up arms against "wanton and unprovoked aggression.....to oppose an effectual barrier to the further progress of a system which struck at the security and peace of

1 Ibid pp.77-78.

all independent nations and was pursued in open defiance of every principle of moderation, good faith and justice." All Britons were not agreed on their war aims, but they were unanimous in their resolve to fight France.

Besides the facts of his illness and his youthful reaction to Tom Paine we learn that in November, 1793, when the Rector attended the Assembly at Chester he was accompanied by Reginald and Thomas. While the purpose of the Assembly was to raise a sum for the purchase of flannel shirts and Welsh stockings for the English troops in Flanders, a highlight of their trip was a visit to the theatre where they saw the famed Sarah Siddons act in "Jane Shore". It is noted that "they were both very attentive and affected by her distresses". In the following year Reginald's classical studies embraced Greek, and for that reason his father in making arrangements for his next school suggested it would be wise to wait for several months before he was introduced to French. Thus his parents decided that Reginald having mastered Latin and been introduced to Greek grammar at eleven years of age, is to continue his studies with a new Tutor.

For several years prior to matriculating at Brasenose College, Oxford, Richard, the elder brother, had studied under the tutelage of Dr. Samuel Glasse at Greenford near London. The same type of education was preferred by the Rector for both of his other sons, even though he had himself gone to one of the country's leading public schools. Such procedure was quite

popular at this time for when the boys came to enter the College of their family at Oxford, they were of the majority group, and those from the great public schools of England were in the minority. Early in May escorted by his Aunt Elizabeth young Reginald travelled to Neasdon, outside of London, where he was enrolled as a student under the tutelage of a Reverend Mr. Bristow. About twelve pupils lived with the clergyman and his spinster sister, and for the next six school years this was to be the scene of his intellectual activity and the field of his development in leadership qualities. There appears to be evidence that sometime within the first year Reginald was joined at the school by his younger brother Tommy and that the two brothers continued as students together until Reginald left to precede him into Brasenose by two years.

Midway through his Neasdon years he became acquainted with a new student, John Thornton, a lad of his own age and outlook on life. Their mutual attraction nurtured by their three years together was to result in a friendship of a David-and-Jonathan-like quality, which was to survive the separation of College years and continue as a tower of strength for each all through the years of Heber's life. This relationship was to bring him into a whole new area of influences which were to contribute much to his life. John like Reginald came from a Tory family. His father, Samuel Thornton, was at this time Member of Parliament for Kingston-upon-Hull with William Wilberforce as his colleague. John was named after his famed grandfather,

banker and prominent member of the Clapham Sect, the dynamic nucleus of the Evangelical Party of the Church of England. Henry Thornton, an even better known member of this stimulating group, was his Uncle. He, too, was a Member of Parliament representing the powerful constituency of Surrey. An excellent man of business, of spotless character, he rendered valuable service to his religious friends in Parliament. He was Wilberforce's right hand man in the crusade against the Slave Trade; he was one of the chief founders of the Church Missionary Society, and its first treasurer; he was the life and soul of the foundation of the colony at Sierra Leone; he was one of the first promoters of, and a valued contributor to the "Christian Observer"; as well as being the first treasurer of the British and Foreign Bible Society. In every project that was dear to the Evangelical mind he took a leading part. The importance of this connection between Reginald and John Thornton and his family must never be lost sight of when we study Heber's relationship to the Church and its parties.

During his first years at Neasdon only one incident seems to have survived the wear of time. Emily Heber's sense of humour is rarely ever observable in her published Memoirs of her distinguished husband, but it did allow her to include an account of a daring experiment of Reginald's which took place early in his residence at his new school and nearly had disastrous consequences. Having read of the way in which an African traveller had parried the attack of a wild bull, he

decided to attempt the experiment himself. Close at hand in a neighbouring field there was a bull of the proper unfriendly disposition. Advancing towards the animal, holding his hat before his face and making the described gesticulations which had served the traveller, he confidently expected to see the bull turn tail and flee. But this bull knew nothing of such timid reaction as had been shown by his African relation and he reacted in the Spanish tradition when this arm waving intruder drew nigh - he charged and Reginald fled. Leaping the fence which divided the field from Mr. Bristow's garden he sought safety with the annoyed bull plunging after him, through the fence, and into a pool of water where he floundered in the mud with his head not many feet from the alcove window behind which Mr. and Miss Bristow had been seated quietly enjoying their afternoon tea. What sequel may have developed to this venture - some experiment of the young student is not known but in the passage of time he must have gained a new perspective about the incident and regaled his friends with it in after years.

From the recollections of John Thornton we receive an interesting account of the habits and interests of young Heber as he was known to his fellow students. After commenting upon the strong memory and lively imagination which had been cultivated to an extraordinary degree through his reading habits, he states that Reginald frequently failed to keep pace with his class-mates, not for his inability to grasp the subject but because of a tendency to day-dream.

His superiority was however, manifested by his compositions in prose and verse, but especially the latter. In his prose exercises, there was a maturity of thought and display of knowledge greatly beyond his years; and his verses were always spirited and original, or if any of the thoughts or expressions were borrowed, they proceeded from sources little known to ordinary readers, and certainly not to his school-fellows. Spenser was always one of his favourite authors. With his "Faerie Queene" in his pocket, he would sally forth on a long solitary walk, whilst his comrades were occupied with the common sports of school-boys in which he seldom engaged. Yet he was by no means unpopular on this account. On the contrary, his invulnerable temper, his overflowing kindness of heart, his constant cheerfulness, and his inexhaustible power of entertaining his companions, secured to him the affection of all, whether older or younger than himself.

For the exact sciences, or for critical knowledge he had no taste. When asked the date of a particular event, he could seldom give it, but he always knew who were alive at the time of its occurrence, by whose agency it was brought about, and what were the important consequences that resulted from it.¹

Possessing a definite facility with foreign languages he regarded the structure of them as of secondary importance, concerning himself with grasping the meaning of the author. Even in these early years he was not insensible to the value of literary reputation and often commented that idleness was inexcusable with the examples of the distinguished scholars of the past before him.

1 Heber, Amelia - The Life of Reginald Heber, D.D.
Vol.I., pp.8-9.

After three happy years of association together as students and companions in things of the mind and of the spirit, John Thornton left Neasdon and Reginald continued.

Despite what seemed to be a successful beginning to the war from England's viewpoint, reverses came and with the loss of her allies she gradually realised that her armies alone were not enough to stem this overwhelming tide on the Continent and as the Rector expressed it,

The best policy that can be pursued by the government of this country will be to increase our Navy, and I trust under the Blessing of Providence, our Wooden Walls will prove an impregnable defence if the Sons of Britannia prove but true to themselves.¹

In March of 1797 the Rector of Malpas and Hodnet rejoiced with the nation in the news of the victory of the Battle of Cape Saint Vincent (14th February, 1797) which Admiral Sir John Jervis, aided by the till then unknown Commodore Nelson, gained over the Spanish fleet. But after that brief hour of exultation a mutiny broke out in the English ships which threatened the very security of England until wisdom prevailed and abuses which impaired the discipline and spirit of the Fleet were corrected. It was a very grave time in the history of the Island for in these months of the spring and summer a third of the population of the British Isles was ready to repudiate its allegiance to the Crown. Ireland after a century of injustice and racial and

1. The Heber Letters, p.87.

and religious persecution was in Rebellion. In June of the next year Mr. Bristow received a Private letter from Ireland which was at variance from the accounts in the newspapers and which was read to his students. It made such an impression upon the fifteen year old Reginald that he repeated the substance of it in a letter to his Mother; the idea of rebellion against the Episcopacy and the Monarchy was thoroughly repugnant to his mind.

Although Nelson defeated the ships of Napoleon in the Battle of the Nile on 1st August, 1798, it was exactly two months later before the news reached London. There was scarcely anyone in England who did not realise the magnitude of the victory. The Heber boys heard the news at Stratford where they reported the people were all intoxicated with joy and drink! This great British naval triumph was to serve as the inspiration for one of Reginald's earliest poetic efforts of which we have record. Mr. Bristow, seeking to invest one of the prosaic school assignments with contemporary interest, assigned "The Battle of the Nile" as an exercise in versification. The resulting lines which he later titled "The Prophecy of Ishmael" revealed eloquent promise of the poetic ability possessed by this precocious lad which was to blaze into prominence at Oxford for all England to marvel at.

In the summer preceding, when Reginald was fourteen, he had spent many hours reading and studying the contents of his mother's "Companion to the Altar". When he felt he had mastered

its contents he surprised his parents by revealing the nature of his studies and requesting permission to accompany his mother to the altar on the next Sacrament Sunday in his father's Church. This was a natural development in the life of this serious minded youth raised in the spiritual atmosphere of a country rectory created by his God-revering and loving parents. A reverence for everything sacred inspired by his study of the Scriptures and keen observation of nature in his strolling around the country-side came to be another outstanding characteristic of his personality noted at this time and all through his exemplary life.

His sense of his entire dependence upon God, and of thankfulness for the mercies which he received, was deep, and almost an instinct planted in his nature.¹

It was natural for him to lift up his spirit in prayer, in joy and in sorrow, in gratitude for the blessings which came to him.

His first impulse, when afflicted or rejoicing, was to fall on his knees in thanksgiving, or in intercession for himself, and for those he loved, through the mediation of his Saviour.²

During his last year at Neasdon, with his good friend having left, Reginald began the correspondence with John Thornton which was to continue to the end of his life. These

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I.

p.4.

2 Ibid. p.4.

letters from Reginald were saved by John and thus were available to be used in the "Life of Reginald Heber, D.D.", by his wife when she compiled it in 1830. This collection of letters is still in the possession of the Thornton family. As one reads the original letters one cannot escape the wish that the other half of this correspondence was also available, but despite its loss the letters we have provide much information for the life and activity of Reginald Heber, for while he wrote less frequently as his life became busier he did write lengthier missives giving more information concerning himself.

From the letters written from November 1799 through October 1800 we note the development in his studies.

In Greek I go on in the old train, being now deep engaged in Longinus, Prometheus Vincit., and the Epistles with Locke's commentary; besides which I read the "Essay on the Human Understanding" for two hours every evening after I have finished my exercise. Locke, you know, I used to think very stupid; but I have now quite altered my opinion.

You ask me what is the plan of operations in my studies. I am afraid that I have of late a good deal relaxed from my former diligence, and my advances in Homer and algebra are not equal to what I hoped. I have, however, not totally neglected these; and I have got on fast in Guicciardini and Machiavel, and at my spare hours have read one half of Knolles' History of the Turks, which you know Johnson highly, and I think deservedly, commends. I, for my own part, have never met with a greater mass of information, or, considering the time when it was written, a more pleasing style... ..You will laugh at me for studying Machiavel, but I read him principally for the sake of his style; though I frankly own I think much better of him than the generality of the world

(who probably have never read him) profess
to do.¹

In these comments he discloses his interest in "style" in writing to which he is to devote much effort in developing his own prose and poetry. There are in existence two letters written by young Heber to John Thornton describing his school activities, one is entirely in Latin, and the other is in French, perhaps written as class assignments. During the summer he reperused the Old Testament and studied his Greek.

One of his hobbies was drawing. Early he had shown an interest in sketching and as his skill developed he found more and more satisfaction in expressing in this way the things and places he saw which interested him. In this time before the invention of cameras he was to develop his talent in sketches of interesting scenes in his travels to share with his family and friends. In August of 1800 on a corner of his letter to John in a small circle he sketched in pencil Sir Isaac Newton's house which he had driven past that day. He wrote: "I could almost have pulled off my hat as we drove by."

As one reads these letters one tends to forget that they were penned by a lad in his mid teens; they seem to reflect such maturity of thought and expression. Especially is this true in reading his letter discussing the stipends being paid to the clergy, the presence of Dissension within the Church,

1 Ibid. pp.12-20.

For instance, an Inn at Harrogate was broken
open, but all that was taken was a joint
or two of meat. - That want must surely be
shocking which would brave the gallows to
obtain a single meal. - I have no news to
tell you though the present scene of politics
has fairly succeeded in rousing me from my
former inattention, & I am as eager after
newspapers as ever a Politician of them. all.
Tell me in your next when you go to ~~the~~
By the bye if you ^{try} could give me a few
pennons for my conduct at first going in.
I should thank you, for though I am well
provided both with an introducer & adviser
in my brother - yet I should be glad to hear
your ^{too} on the subject - As I
have so little interesting
to write to you I send you
a sketch of a building which
I passed coming from the north
which will interest you as
much as it did me. I could alter



and his view of the interference of temporal authority in affairs of the Church. One notes, too, the flaming of a youthful and ardent spirit in these expressions of feeling. It was this spirit which led him into the leadership of a student affair early in his last year at Neasdon, and when he found himself over his depth, he wrote to his father,

Neasdon, 28 October 1799.

I now write to you an account of a dilemma of quite a novel kind. I am engaged in circumstances which I have never been engaged in before, and hope I never shall again; I mean a difference with Mr. Bristow. On Saturday last Mr. Bristow went out and not returning till much past the usual dinner hour, we began to conclude he would not come back to dinner. Miss Bristow was not well, so we did not like to disturb her, otherwise I am convinced dinner would have been immediately ordered. I sent to the servants to desire they would send up dinner. They positively refused. We grew angry and said, "If Mr. Bristow did not come home by four, we would have the dinner", on which they set us at defiance. At four having given up all expectation of Mr. Bristow's coming, I, according to my promise to my juniors which I conceived myself bound to keep and thinking besides that we were very ill-used, went into the kitchen and took off in triumph a dish of pork chops and another of potatoes. We carried these into the parlour, the servants refusing to wait on us and sat down to it. In about half an hour or a little more Mr. Bristow came in. He only said "You will excuse me sitting down with you", and without staying to hear what we had to say for ourselves went out. He has not spoken to any of us since, nor will he eat at the same table. Since it is impossible to go on in this way, pray give me some directions¹ for my conduct in this disagreeable business.

1 Cholmondeley, R.H. - The Heber Letters, pp.116-117.

The elderly Rector of Malpas in the role of peacemaker evidently wrote both to the master of the school and the discomfited leader of the brief rebellion. A brief note is despatched by Reginald to his father, in which he wrote,

I am sorry I troubled you with my last letter, but the affair wore more than a serious face than it has done since. Mr. Bristow has, I am happy to say, accepted my apology and the whole disagreement seems in a fair way of termination.¹

In the "Life" Mrs Heber includes a letter to John Thornton dated Nov. 8, 1799, which makes only a slight reference to this affair -

Mr. Bristow had company that evening (Guy Fawkes Day 5th) who staid all night and had very near caused another war, for as they breakfasted early, and had not been provided for, they eat up all our rolls....

Without the preceding letters there was no suggestion that Reginald had anything to do with the obscure reference to "another war". The answer to the mystery is explained upon reading the original letter - it has suffered censorship by a loving wife who wanted no blemish found in her husband's youthful actions! The letter to Thornton starts right off with,

I am glad to be able to inform you that Bristow and the Allies have come again to an agreement on a Status Quo ante Bellum. I never knew a man behave so foolishly in my life. He however received a letter from my father in consequence of one I had written on the subject on the account of which, he would, he said, pass the whole over on condition of our making a promise of future good behaviour. His conduct through the whole was very different from his general character.²

1 Ibid. pp. 116-117.

2 Thornton Collection - MS. Letter.

Reginald's letter shows the influence of the international scene upon his thinking in referring to himself and the lads as "Allies" with the inference that in opposition was Bristow as the Enemy, but there is a deeper significance to this incident. For the first time it appears the twin strain of virtues he had received from his parents clashed. Emotionally stirred by the desire to right a wrong, and no doubt physically stirred by the pangs of hunger he openly rebelled against the authority of the household. He became a Dissenter - nay, more than that, a Rebel against authority which he had been trained to uphold. And he was not comfortable in his rebellious role; it was with real relief that the apology was made and the prior conditions of peace were restored, and with it his role of upholder of authority.

In his letter of 22nd February, 1800, to John he refers to young Bowler, the baker, who used to read regularly in his cart while making his rounds. The boys had evidently wondered about this case of intellectual curiosity being expressed in a tradesman, and when the opportunity presented itself Reginald looked into the cart to find that the books were by Volney, Voltaire and Godwin. One senses a suggestion of a sniff, if not a sneer in his comment - "These are the fruits of circulating libraries." But this remark is made by a tory-minded youth who is only beginning to experience the growth of a social consciousness. This interest in the welfare of the group beyond his family and friends is more clearly seen in an August letter of the same year from Neasdon to Thornton.

What is the common opinion in your neighbourhood on the subject of the harvest? It is a point which so much concerns the whole empire, I may say all Europe, that I have been very curious in enquiring everywhere, about it, and general reports are, I think, not unfavourable; though as the harvest will undoubtedly be a late one, the distress for a month or two longer will, I fear, be terrible. It was a shocking consideration, which I had an opportunity of observing when in Yorkshire, that the number of robberies was very great, no less than three taking place in the neighbourhood of Harrogate during my stay there, and that food alone was stolen. For instance, an inn there was broken open, but all that was taken was a joint or two of meat. That want must surely be shocking, which would brave the gallows to obtain a single meal. I have no news to tell you, though the present scene of politics has fairly succeeded in raising me from my former inattention, and I am as eager after a newspaper as "e'er a politician of them all".¹

A feeling of shyness was strong within him during these years, especially in so far as dancing and social parties were concerned. He wrote to his friend,

You will laugh when I tell you that a misochorist like myself was drawn into a party to a ball. They thought, I believe, to cure me of my antipathy to that kind of see-saw motion, but have not succeeded; I dislike balls as much as ever.²

Some months later, just before leaving Malpas for Oxford, he writes,

I have been a much gayer fellow than usual of late, having been at a race, and also at, what I never saw before, a masquerade. This catalogue of jaunts, though not much perhaps for a girl, has been a great deal for me, and indeed has quite satisfied me.³

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I.

2 Ibid. p.13. p.19.

3 Ibid. p.22.

While he confesses that it didn't prove as entertaining as he had anticipated, perhaps one reason for this feeling may be found in a letter to his younger brother wherein after describing his costume (a Pilgrim), the trip to Wynnstay where the ball was to be held, and the costumes worn by the guests, he slips in the poignant reference - "I had no opportunity of speaking my verses, which I had very much enlarged and rather improved."¹ It is interesting to note in this reference that his reputation as a versifier had moved beyond the bounds of the family, even though no personal appearance was made on this occasion. In a letter to Richard he describes the Races at Shrewsbury and that he "contrived to shirk" meeting a family to whom he was to be introduced. In each of these letters he comments to his brothers on the ladies most beautiful, or generally admired, present at each function. While shy, he was not unmindful of beauty in society, or in nature.

The two friends were to be separated in their University life; Reginald was to go to Oxford where he had been enrolled at Brasenose College and John was to go to Trinity College, Cambridge, each following family preferences. In the former the classics were to be diligently studied, while at the latter the strong emphasis was on mathematics and science. While Reginald was not to enter until after the term opened in the autumn, we find him enquiring from John,

1 Cholmondeley, R.H. - The Heber Letters. p.123.

If you could give me a few instructions for my conduct at first going to College, I should thank you; for though I am well provided both with an introducer and adviser in my brother, yet I should be glad to hear you too on the subject.¹

A short time later he writes

I am to be entered at Brazen Nose about the 10th of October, and am to reside immediately, though entrance keeps a term, since I do not want to waste my time any longer. I am to have a private tutor, which I am very glad of. It is, I believe, principally intended as a contrivance to keep me out of drinking parties, and to give me the advantage of reading to another person instead of to myself.²

Doubtless this was suggested by Richard who knew first hand the temptations Oxford would hold out to its new students from the quiet life of the country. But such fears, as far as Reginald was concerned, were groundless. Meanwhile he was much amused with the preparations he saw being made for furnishing his rooms at College, and he commented, "It is surely a luxurious age when a boy of seventeen requires so much fuss to fit him out".³ He was eagerly looking forward to the new adventure of University life. In poise and confidence, as well as academically, he was ready.

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I.
p.19.

2 Ibid. p.20.

3 Ibid. p.22.

Chapter Three

OXFORD UNIVERSITY 1800-1803
BRASENOSE COLLEGE

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Across the Channel Bonaparte had risen in power to the position of the First Consul, after the overthrow of the old Constitution and the establishment of the new one. The French people saw him as a deliverer. The hopes of the English, which had been so high as a result of their victories at sea, fell as those of France rose. In June of 1800 the Austrian army in the bloody battle of Marengo was defeated by Napoleon's forces and his destiny was clear. He had won an obvious right to rule, bloody though it might be. A diplomatic offensive was launched toward the opposition powers. To France Napoleon gave a new national administration, with a new Code of Laws; the peasants were given security in their lands against the feudal lords, a market for their produce, and the right to worship, so long as the priest kept clear of politics. The new rich and bourgeoisie were to enjoy the pomp and order of the recreated society. Those who had fled France in the early years of the Revolution were given freedom to return. And from all Napoleon sought only one thing: absolute obedience to his will. France was willing and eager to pay the price.

In England, the loss of the summer's crops, for the second successive season, meant high prices, food shortages, and rioting in many centres. "The League of Armed Neutrals" prevented shipments of Baltic grain from reaching England. A rise in population in England more than offset the savings which

farming improvements by enclosures had sought to make. Britain had lost her last effective Allies; all she had left was her command of the sea and the "wooden walls" of her fleet formed the first line of defence. But Napoleon was not yet ready to attack. Early in 1801, by the Act of Union, the Union Jack had the cross of St. Patrick superimposed on those of St. George and St. Andrew. A few months earlier the Cabinet had secretly agreed that the oath which still excluded Catholics from Parliament and the supreme office must be revised to bring all Irishmen within the Union. A broad and inclusive basis in Church and State had at last become compatible with the security of the minority; without it there could be no permanent peace or safety in Ireland. Greater toleration would mean justice and security for the nation. But the King saw it as a plot to destroy the Church and the Civil Order. And on this rock the administration of William Pitt crashed, to the consternation of the thinking and propertied minority. Addington was asked by the King to form a new Cabinet, and the one which he succeeded in forming was termed a "collection of second-rate Tories".

Nelson's victory at Copenhagen over the Danish fleet and Abercrombie's defeat of a French force at Alexandria threatened to turn the tide but the unimaginative Cabinet and its leader, seeking only peace and anticipating the rewards of its expanding manufacturing skill and enterprise in the years ahead, made secret peace offers to Napoleon.

This was exactly what he wanted but he took great pains to

conceal his reasons, which were to renew the strength of his people and prepare for the knock-out blow against England. On 1st October, 1801, the Preliminary Treaty of Peace was signed.

So much for a glimpse of the vast background of the Continental scene just preceding and during the first year that Reginald Heber spent at Brasenose College, Oxford. Actually from his records of this first year one would not suspect that a struggle on the grand scale was being indulged in by Europe's two largest powers. From the contents of his letters the year sounds very much like a freshman year in any generation of that century or of this, except for certain details which stamp the happenings as belonging to Oxford at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Earlier he had commented in a letter to Thornton,

I am sorry that you are edging still further off from my haunts; but, however, what are fifty or one hundred miles to two lads with affectionate hearts and hardy outsides? Cambridge and Oxford have, as I believe, a mail running between them, so that at College we are only a few hours drive asunder.¹

This theme of friendship is reported frequently in varied forms in the letters which survive. It seems that despite the short distance separating them and their hardy constitutions, they never did succeed in visiting each other, probably because both were serious students and did not feel that such time

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D.
Vol.I., p.18.

could be spared. It is possible, and seems likely, that they did visit at their homes during the long vacation in later college years, although these visits do not appear to have been frequent. However, they did continue to write lengthy, chatty letters concerning their interests and activities. Many interesting sidelights of college life are revealed by Reginald's letters.

I have got through all the formalities of examination, matriculation, and all other -ations, that are necessary. I have been fortunate in being able, for the present, to borrow very decent rooms, and have hopes of still better for my own next term.

(Actually, he was disappointed that he had not been able to secure the same apartment which his brother Richard, and their Uncle before him had occupied. One of these is the very attractive corner room on the second floor which has windows overlooking Exeter College Gardens and the Radcliffe Camera. He did get it later and this is known today as the Heber room).

As to the plan of my studies I really know as yet nothing about the matter; that is to be settled tomorrow. My father and mother, who had been on a visit in Northamptonshire, came up with me here, and go away tomorrow. I was in great hopes that my brother would have been able to meet me, and still expect him daily. My acquaintances lie quite differently from yours. I, indeed, know several of the Fellows (these were friends of Richard's, a Fellow of Brasenose), the Senior proctor, the Bishop (Dr. William Cleaver, Bishop of Chester and Principal of the College), etc., but they are great men and not given to associate with freshmen and commoners; so that I believe my acquaintance with them will be only bows.....I have been just this instant most agreeably surprised by the sudden arrival of my brother Richard. He only staid an

instant and set off to the Kings Arms, to my father and mother. I would fain have gone with him; but it is past nine and the gates are shut.¹

While the acquaintances he had formed before coming to Brasenose were in a much higher level of collegiate society than that in which he would be moving, as he correctly recognised, at this time, they would and did help him to feel at ease in his new environment. In spite of the fact that he was not coming to Oxford with a number of school companions he was more fortunate in his acquaintances than many. Richard drew closer to Reginald in his role as guide and counsellor and his literary influence became especially strong in these early years. T.S.Smyth had been selected as tutor for him and between these two a fine friendship developed.

The Brasenose College Register shows that twenty-one students, including young Heber, enrolled in 1800. Their ages were varied: two were sixteen years old, six were seventeen, seven were eighteen, and five were listed as nineteen, with one unmarked. They came from eleven different counties and Ireland, with Cheshire, Lancashire and London accounting for half of the entrants. Of the Colleges of Oxford, Brasenose was known as the most proper for north-western men, according to Fuller's "Worthies". Most of these were rich young country gentlemen and many of them were coming to the College as it was the

1 Ibid. pp.23-24.



expected thing to do. In fact, life at the University had gained a reputation in the eighteenth century as a very easy and comfortable one; socially enjoyable and not academically difficult.

Brasenose College, like the University, was a "rakish modish place full of foppery and drunkenness".¹

Such was the harsh reputation Reginald Heber's College had earned in the preceding century. Sir John Marriott, writing in "Oxford - Its Place in National History", has declared that

Neither in Oxford nor in the country at large was the eighteenth century quite so black as it has commonly been painted. But there is no doubt that Learning was at a low ebb; that of good teaching there was lamentably little, either in the University or the colleges; that the range of studies was exceedingly contracted; that discipline was lax, while the examinations for a "Degree" had degenerated, as much contemporary testimony proves, into a mere farce. The turn of the century marked in Oxford the turn of the tide.²

The next century in England was to be characterised as an era of reform - social, parliamentary, industrial, fiscal, and, not least, educational. The old days had gone for good when the New Examination Statute was passed at Oxford University in 1800. The old style of don began gradually to disappear. The new statute made the public examination for the Degree in Arts a

1 Brasenose Quatercentenary Monographs, XIII, p.64.

2 Marriott, John A.R. - Oxford - Its Place in National History p.164.

reality, and rewarded industry and ability by giving Honours, First and Second Class, to candidates who distinguished themselves. Since 1800 the awarding of an Oxford degree has meant something, and a First Class, whether gained in Classics or in other subjects, has meant a great deal.

Reginald Heber experienced no difficulty of adjustment in settling into his student life. He indicates that he changed his plan of study from the one he had used at Neasdon. Finding that by early rising he could get in two hours of reading before chapel, he made arrangements with another student to read with him. Strangely enough, he does not mention the name of this lad, with whom he attended a course in mathematics; he describes him as agreeable and remarkably clever; and though only sixteen, above average in his acquirements and understanding. Perhaps, the imperfect resemblance noted to Thornton, or his apparent learning served to attract Reginald to him as a serious study companion. It seems probable that this unnamed lad would be a member of the same entering class as Heber, and as there are only two aged sixteen listed in the College Register, he might have been either Robert Newton (Lancashire) or Thomas Winfield (Cheshire).

Few College men ever achieve a form of immortality by any of their observations of college customs, and yet as a mere freshman, Reginald Heber was to win a measure of fame in this manner. Of the many traditions which have survived at Oxford, one of the most noted is the Mallard Feast of All Souls. Early

in a January morning of 1801, Reginald was awakened by the sound of men singing, and in the cold and darkness of his room he sat at the window watching with fascinated eyes the scene which he later described to his friend at Cambridge. This description of a rarely witnessed scene has achieved a lasting fame.

I write under the bondage of a very severe cold, which I caught by getting out of bed at four in the morning, to see the celebration of the famous All Souls' Mallard Feast. All Souls is on the opposite side of Ratcliffe Square to Brazen Nose, so that their battlements are in some degree commanded by my garret. I had thus a full view of the Lord Mallard and about forty fellows, in a kind of procession on the library roof, with immense lighted torches, which had a singular effect. I know not if their orgies were overlooked by any uninitiated eyes except my own; but I am sure that all who had the gift of hearing, within half a mile, must have been awakened by the manner in which they thundered their chorus "O by the blood of King Edward".¹

Reginald, although seventeen, had very slight interest in the fair sex. With the characteristic shyness of the adolescent he had found very little interest in the social occasions of the country when the families of the gentry joined together for a ball or masquerade and entertainment. That he was aware of the female presence is illustrated by his comments to his brothers as to who were considered the beauties of the ball, when he attended, but he never indicated any personal interest. But if he had revealed no real interest in girls of his own age, it was not to be inferred that he had not been giving some

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I.,p.25.

thought to the kind of girl that he should be interested in when the right person came into his circle of acquaintanceship. The result of this thought is revealed in a letter addressed to John Thornton, dated 24th February, 1801. It was omitted from the Memoirs published by the one he found to be the girl of his choice. We can appreciate her position as she came to edit the correspondence which formed the basis of the two volume life of her distinguished husband - this letter was a frivolous one compared to others and it might not be appreciated by John and his wife. Perhaps the letter had not been submitted for her consideration.

This letter was written as a thoughtful, serious answer to a question which had been posed to him by his friend, evidently concerning a situation in which he seemed to be involved with a new acquaintance at Cambridge. He claims inexperience for the role of a competent adviser, but nevertheless sincerely tries to think through the problem and help his friend. The letter gives an insight into the maturity of this teen-age lad.

B.N.C. Feb.24, 1801.

My dear Thornton,

You have in your last kind letter given me a very crabbed question, and one that would perplex the distinction and syllogisms of a Doctor Irrefragabilis. But to speak seriously, it is a point of so much nicety that you have proposed to me, that I (inexperienced as I am in the different shades of female character) find it very difficult to give you an answer.

I think, however, that the circumstances you are at present entangled in, are the most unpleasant and perplexing that ever a newly entered academician was hampered with. What is worse, it is not "Beauty" that has "sought the triumph of a letter'd heart".

If I were not perfectly confident and secure of your prudence and strength of mind, I should be (I own) very anxious concerning you. A little too much of good-nature or of vanity, might be the means of making you unhappy for your whole life. The natural vanity of human nature, makes us apt to exalt our own triumph by clothing our admirers with imaginary merit; while a false good nature whispers that we ought not to prolong the affliction of so amiable a creature as we fancy our captive to be. I am convinced that many sensible people of both sexes, have on these principles thrown themselves away, beneath their deserts, and contrary to their real inclination. I should then recommend you to steel your heart against too much even of an amiable sensibility. A cold and distant behaviour and as much as possible keeping out of the sight of the lady who is attached to you, seems to be the wisest method you can pursue. Nor is there any reason to fear that the wounds occasioned by your firmness, will be either incurable or very lasting. You will immediately recollect an occurrence in Yorkshire which throws, I think, great light on the female character in this point. In fact, it may be reduced to this argument, if she is really a woman whose reason retains any authority over her passions, there is no doubt of her conquering an unavailing affection; if she is not such a woman, she is no fit wife for my Thornton.

However, some people may affect to slight personal attractions, I think these too form a prominent, though not the most prominent feature in connubial happiness. Though I would not choose a wife for her beauty, yet I should hesitate a long time before I chose an ugly woman. Besides if I understand you right you profess your indifference though not dislike to the lady in question. But a marriage which begins with indifference will rarely end in affection; for the caresses and endearments of unparticipated passions (and you know how violent the passions of women are) will rather tend to change coolness into disgust, than warm it into Love (-torn MS-) violent love on one side joined to coldness on the (-torn MS-) seems a state of misery only to be equalled by the torture inflicted by Mozentius.

Resistance then is less cruel than compliance, and I therefore must determine on what would be called the harsh side of the question. I give this advice however with great diffidence, both

from my own inexperience and the imperfect view you have given me of the business. You have not told me whether your own penetration has discovered this passion or whether the woman herself by a shameless breach of the rules of modesty revealed it, and thrown herself (as it is called in the jargon of sentiment) on your mercy, and tenderness. This step unless very particular circumstances intervened to excuse it, would alone be sufficient reason for continuing inflexible. There is another point which I wish to mention which is if you marry out of pity you become a most perfect slave, since every deviation from your wife's whims will seem want of generosity, and will appear to reproach her with your kindness in marrying her. You must either counterfeit a love which you do not feel which is the greatest misery or submit to continual repinings and probably jealousies, for a woman who sees you do not love her will immediately conclude you love somebody else. Self Love always makes them conclude that their charms are such as would melt any but a preoccupied heart. These are a few of the probable consequences of such a union. I repeat it then. Marry to please yourself, not to oblige your wife. But after all, I feel myself, as well from inexperience as from not having a clear idea of the subject, a very incompetent adviser. There is one to whom I must refer you, who both in experience of the world and a sincere desire for your happiness is the most proper of all advisers. I mean your father. His advice, I would most undoubtedly ask and if possible, follow it exactly.

I remain, my dear Friend,
Yours sincerely,
R.H.¹

A month later having heard from Thornton he replies and an extract from this answer reveals that John had merely been playing a joke on Reginald: that it had been an hypothetical case with which Reginald had been troubled to pour out his

1 Thornton Collection - MS Letter No.17.

heart. Thornton was not perplexed by the love of a maid at all. However, the joke had evidently "boomeranged" as such jokes frequently do and someone else had read the letter meant for John's eyes alone.

March 28, 1801

I am sorry my dear friend that my bad pen and incurious fingers should have laid open your secrets and my grave advice to a third Person. I own I did suppose you to be in earnest, since what you tell me with apparent seriousness I have always been accustomed to believe, nay I will further confess that I almost apprehended that your "visionary maid" had made some impression on your heart.¹

One suspects that the effect of this practical joke was to place a strain on their friendship; at least, the correspondence lapses. The next dated letter was written in the spring of 1803 but it does mention a previous one having been written. The Thornton Collection has only one undated letter which is indicated as belonging to this interval. Undoubtedly, both young men were increasingly occupied with their studies. Late in the first term Reginald in commenting on "Fellowships" expressed the thought that he should like very well to have one. The prospect of "an excellent society, good rooms, and the finest situation for study in the world" held an appeal for him right from the beginning of his collegiate career and it was a dream which inspired him all through his Brasenose years until he was elected to All Souls, as its fulfilment.

1 Ibid, No.18.

Academically, while weak in mathematics, he was strong in the Classics, and it was through his love of the latter that he was able to make a mark for himself, in his first year at Brasenose. Intrigued by the official announcement of the subject of the Latin prize poem, "The Last Century", Reginald wrote home that he might try for it. He had had little previous experience in the art of writing Latin hexameters, as preparation for engaging in competition with students from schools such as Winchester and Eton which had similar annual contests.

Fortified by the years he had read and written Latin, by his love of poetry, by the experience of "The Prophecy of Ishmael" at Neasdon, and burning with ambition to win in one of the contests which should bring honours to his family and himself, he concentrated on the task. The Latin hexameters he wrote recorded in heroic style the progress of scholarship, exploration, and philanthropy which ushered in the nineteenth century. In a letter to John, following the contest, he wrote:

I was very closely engaged last week with a copy of verses, as you will believe, when I tell you that I literally had no time to shave, insomuch that my beard was as long and hoary as that of his majesty the erl king. I succeeded tolerably well in my verses, and had to read them in hall; the most nervous ceremony I ever went through.¹

While we may credit the proud author with becoming modesty for his humble estimation of his success, and for being strictly truthful in his physical reaction to the event, it must be recognised that this fair haired youth of seventeen was

¹ Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I., p.27.

indulging in poetic exaggeration in the description of his beard. The winning of the University Latin prize poem contest with his "Carmen Seculare" brought recognition and honour to him. More than that it helped him in establishing his claims to elegant scholarship and inspired him with hopes of still greater academic distinction. Commenting on this work some years afterwards, Christopher North, who came to know and honour him in these college years, wrote:

It is a very animated and poetical composition, but its Latinity is certainly not so pure, nor its versification so Virgilian as some of the Latin prize poems from Winchester and Eton. That he could beat all the best men of his year, at their own weapon, was, however, a **proof** of his boldness and his ingenuity.¹

Reginald's tutor, the Rev. Thomas Smyth, writing to Richard, the elder brother, from Eton in November 1801, where he was visiting, related a conversation with Dr. Goodall, Provost of Eton.

Dr G. speaking of Wm. Way mentioned to me that he had shown him a copy of verses by a Mr Heber of Brasenose which "perfectly astonished him"! I believe these were his exact words. A compliment from such a man ceases to be a compliment and I felt pleasure which my regard for Reginald will ever make me feel in anything that reflects honour upon him.²

Reginald was following in the collegiate steps of his brother Richard, and their father, in adding increased academic honour to the family name. This success kindled his scholastic

1 Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine Nov. 1827. p. 618.

2 Cholmondeley, R.H. - The Heber Letters p. 179.

ambition into a steadily burning flame.

But for Reginald it was not necessary to win contests to acquire friends. His family connections and his brother's presence in Oxford helped to pave the way for him, but he himself had much to contribute to any group of which he was a member. He was gaining the poise and confidence in the art of conversation which was being fashioned and moulded in the colleges and society centres of those years before it became one of the scintillating characteristics of the Age of Elegance in England.

Choice sprouts of the brain - epigram, anecdote, metaphor - were convivially lavished upon one another by the clever men and women of those bibulous but pleasant days, who equipped themselves at leisure for the contests of wit which each late supper-party provoked.¹

Reginald, in an early letter to John which suffered emendation in preparation for publication, commented on his social life in this manner,

I agree with you on the subject of that fabled academical leisure. We are, at Cambridge and Oxford, in the economy of time, perfect Cartesians; we admit of no vacuum. I have been through my Cheshire connexions and the long residence of my brother, introduced to a great many people; and this has, of course produced very numerous parties. It is not expected that a man should give a party the first term and I therefore have had none of my own but I have been invited to 5 dinners, 5 suppers, 6 or 7 breakfasts and I don't know how many wine parties which is certainly pretty well for four weeks, but, I assure you, I shall preserve my character for sobriety. No man is obliged to drink more than he pleases, nor have I seen any

1 Falconer Madan - Oxford Outside the Guide Books, p.152.



of that spirit of playing tricks on freshmen which we are told were usual forty or fifty years ago at the universities.¹

While five letters dated in this first year of residence at Brasenose exist in the Thornton collection, no other one of their college years produced this output of friendship. That this was so was not because of any diminution of their relations, but because Reginald became more and more occupied with his studies and activities at Brasenose, and we can assume that the same pressure was being experienced by John. As Reginald wrote in an undated note (perhaps in the second year),

My last hasty note, I hope, would induce you to suspend your opinion of my conduct, till further information. Believe me this interruption to our correspondence has caused the most sincere concern since to appear indifferent to your Friendship could make me quite miserable.²

A further evidence of the popularity of Reginald Heber, in spite of his intention of "preserving his character for sobriety in bibulous company", was his membership in the oldest Social College Club in Oxford, the "Phoenix Common Room" at Brasenose. This was of an exclusive nature since membership was limited to twelve undergraduates. The ordinary meetings took place on Sunday evenings. According to the "Brasenose Quatercentenary Monographs", a feature of the meetings by the turn of the century were five regular toasts, "Our Old Friend", "The King",

1 Thornton Collection MS.Letter No.15.

2 Ibid. No.21.

"The Phoenix", "Absent Members", and "The Secretary". The records show that Reginald was later joined by his younger brother Thomas as a member of this select club, with the latter having the honour of being "The Secretary".

An ancient custom at Brasenose College is the celebration of Shrove Tuesday with the drinking of "Lamb's Wool"¹ as the more-or-less famous college ale is termed. A feature of the dinner in connection with the ale was the recitation of a specially written verse in honour of the annual observance. An extract from the ode presented in 1889 by P.M. Watkins reads:

But so much for things of today: Prior hints there's
a toast we must drink
And the heroes of old of the college should ne'er in
oblivion sink:
So now let us drink to our worthies and reunion their
shades to the feast;
Once more let us welcome them back from the haunts
of the silent released.
See! shadows are moving amongst us; Sir Richard and
good Bishop Smith;
And Heber, the gentle composer; and Childe so notorious
in myth.²

In juxtaposition with the distinguished names of the founders of Brasenose, Bishop William Smith and Sir Richard Sutton, and just before the famed Childe of Hale, John Middleton, (a giant of nine feet three inches!) we note the name of Heber, "the gentle composer". The reference is undoubtedly to the fame

- 1 "Lamb's Wool" or Brasenose Ale recipe - Warm beer, half a pound of sugar to one gallon, sprinkled with Nutmeg and Spice, put baked apples in when cool. Drink when milk warm. Gallicollis & Spira - Aeneinasensiana p.40.
- 2 Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1901 - Brasenose Ale.

he achieved in the world through his hymns, - and through his poem, "Palestine" in the University and through all England; but, to knowing Brasenose men, he has other claims to renown, best known to them. One of the earliest of their Ale verses is attributed to Reginald.¹ The editor of "Brasenose Ale: A collection of verses annually presented on Shrove Tuesday, by the Butler of Brasenose College, Oxford", states the probable date of this fifteen verse praise of ale as being 1806. There is no definite evidence but it seems more probable that it was written while he was an upper classman (1801-1803). Since he was away from Oxford from July, 1805 to October, 1806, it seems less probable that it was written between then and the end of the year, than that it should have been penned while he was resident at Brasenose. One might also suggest the feeling of the poem as being sophomoric.

If this mosaic-like piece of Heber's fame at College causes surprise to some readers, let us examine another piece of verse credited to him which is of a similar mood. I refer to the "Ballad"² which does not appear in any of the published works edited by Mrs Heber. If it were known to her, one can sympathise with her for omitting it from the collection of the Bishop's poems. It's entirely possible, if it was written in

1 Vide Appendix 1 - Heber's Brasenose Ale Verse.

2 Heber, Reginald - A Ballad. (Copies exist at the British Museum, London, and the Bodleian Library, Oxford University).

these college years, as I believe, that no copy of it had been retained by Reginald, and the original had been saved by a fellow student, who for some mysterious reason decided to publish it in 1830, four years after the death of Bishop Heber. The title page of the copy in the British Museum (from the library of the Rt.Hon.Thomas Grenville) may cause a gasp as one reads -

A
Ballad
by the
Rev.Reginald Heber
Late
Bishop of Calcutta

Lithog. by W.Crane, Chester.

An Old and Approved Receipt for Raising the
Devil founded on Tradition and now offered to
the Public by an Amateur of the Black Arte.¹

As we read this lighthearted, youthful verse and think of its subject, it certainly seems that it probably came from his first or second year at College, if not written at home during a summer vacation. While there is no direct evidence as to when, how or why this was written by Reginald, the reminiscence of an unknown college friend quoted by Mrs Heber throws some light on the interests in the old fabliaux and romances he had in this period.

1 Vide Appendix 2, Heber's Ballad: Receipt for Raising the Devil.

One moonlight night (I do not recollect the year) we were walking together, talking of the old fabliaux and romances with which his memory was full; and we continued our walk till long past midnight.¹

That he was interested in the romantic ballads and found inspiration in them as a form for his poetic expression is indicated by this grotesque piece and the Brasenose Ale piece. These efforts, especially the latter, may seem most incongruous when viewed in the light of the saintly aura which the kindly, virtuous bishop - the beloved gentle composer - left behind him when he stepped beyond the ephemeral curtains of life, but viewed in the perspective of growth, one sees his love of story telling, attuned by his lively imagination spinning frothy tales for his companions, as a small boy ecstatically blows soap bubbles which float off through the air only to be shattered. There is a provoking mystery as to why this "Ballad" should have been printed when it was, four years after the author's death. Quite obviously it was not brought to light by Mrs Heber or the publisher of most of the Heber works, John Murray of London. Could it have been done by an old college mate, lacking a delicate sense of fitness or with a diabolic sense of humour, who enjoyed shocking the unwary purchaser in those threshold days of the Victorian age? Perhaps it was just an opportunity to reap a few pounds from the Heber popularity! What a lifting of eyebrows and a pursing of lips there must have been as the gruesome fantasy was perused!

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I., p.341.

The previous quotation from a letter of one of Reginald's contemporaries whose name could not be divulged in 1830 was evidently from the "post-Palestine" half of his Oxford years. In this letter the writer continued commenting on the evening when old fabliaux and romances filled the mind of his companion. Reginald, he recollected, on that occasion said that the style of George Ellis was a very easy one to imitate and as they went along, he recited, composing as he walked.

He came to my rooms, and wrote it down the next day. He called it "The Boke of the purple Faucon".¹

In a footnote, the editor states that another copy of this romance was given in later years by her husband under a different title, and with a few alterations consisting largely in the addition of a marginal table of contents, and it was this which was published in Vol.I. of the "Life" -pp.341-345.

In the same letter there is a reference to an incident which has lived for nearly a century and a half in the annals of Brasenose College.

Many of his contemporaries will recollect other exercises of kindred talent; one was a mock heroic poem, the subject of which was laid in his own college: but though he wished to forget this jeu d'esprit, as it gave offence at the time.....it may be said of it, as, indeed, of all his performances in this line, that his wit was without malice, and his humour without a tinge of grossness. His sense of the ridiculous was certainly at this time very keen;

1 Ibid. p.341.

but I never heard him say an unkind word; and it was in effusions of this sort that the spirits of his youth found vent.¹

The incident referred to spurred Heber's Muse to create "The Whippiad", which has come to be regarded as the Brasenose Epic. As the editor of the college magazine expressed it, over a century after it was written,

"The Whippiad" is a poetical piece which, though it smacks of older and somewhat coarser times, is a clever and ingenious poem by one of the Nine Worthies of Nineteenth Century Brasenose.²

The incident commemorated by Heber occurred in 1802, when he and a group of fellow students observed a fracas between the college Dean and a recent graduate. The Rev. Henry Holliwell, a Tutor and Dean of Brasenose, had acquired a reputation with the students for the stringency of his regulations, and the arbitrary conduct he displayed in his role as Dean. In addition, the students had nicknamed him "Dr. Toe" because of a malformation in one of his feet. One of his particular aversions was the cracking of a whip, and it was this antipathy which led to the affair. To his Alma Mater the Rev. Bernard Port came to revisit some of his associates, and as he came into the quadrangle, either ignorant or careless of the Dean's regulations, he signalled his entrance by loudly cracking a tandem whip. The

1 The Brazen Nose Vol.I. (Nov.1910.No.3).

2 Vide Appendix 3. - Heber's The Whippiad.

obnoxious sound echoing through the sacred precincts of Brasenose brought the furious Dean running to the point of disturbance. Upon his confronting Port, an altercation ensued, which led to a scuffle for the possession of the whip, in which effort the whip was broken, and the Doctor was overthrown, to his discomfiture and the suppressed glee of the spectators. That night at the suggestion of many who had witnessed the event, Heber wrote the first canto of the poem¹ which was to assume epic qualities.

"The Whippiad" and "The Brasenose Ale Verse" served to establish more firmly the literary reputation which Heber had started during his first year by winning the Latin prize poem contest. These, as well as other light verse offerings, had served to endear him to his contemporaries not only within the confines of his own Brasenose but among the students of the other colleges of the University. A lad with a sturdy growing Christian faith, he moved in the social and academic circles of Oxford with an increasing number of acquaintances and friends as his personality became recognised for its attractive, sterling qualities. When he had first entered upon his university life, the Principal of Brasenose, Dr. William Cleaver, Bishop of Chester, had cautioned him strongly against too large an acquaintance, and the young freshman had written to his friend, "It is a thing I certainly would not court". And he didn't, but he grew

1 Vide Appendix 3. Heber's The Whippiad.

steadily in favour with his fellow-commoners, and a number of these contemporaries came in after university years to enjoy roles of friendship and influence both in his life in England and in India.

The spring of 1802 saw the celebration of the official Proclamation of Peace between France and England. All who had been denied the delights of continental travelling for the nine long years of siege sought to satisfy their desires as soon as the way was opened for cross-channel traffic. Richard Heber with his friend, George Eyre, left early in December to visit Paris. It was at that time that Reginald's ambition spurred him in preparation for the highest vault for fame that he had yet attempted. Toward this all other efforts had been but rehearsals with the Muse! "A sort of prize extraordinary for English verses - the subject Palestine", thus he reported the prize contest which he aspired to win. The idea appealed to him as a fine one admitting "of much fancy and many sublime ideas" ranging the whole vivid history of the Holy Land. He discussed with other men the question as to whether the treatment should be made exclusively sacred or not. Many felt it should be, but his love of the Scripture caused him to write,

I have an utter dislike to clothing sacred subjects in verse, unless it be done as nearly as possible in Scripture language, and introduced with great delicacy.

The preparation of this poem engaged much of his time and effort in his third year at Brasenose. The outline and rough

draft of it was completed before the Christmas holidays and when he returned from Malpas he continued in his research and reading for the long poem which filled his mind as he became more enraptured with his subject. A severe attack of influenza shortened the precious time before the completed manuscript was to be submitted. Near the end of April his brother Richard came to town, accompanied by Walter Scott, who was making his first visit to Oxford University. The subject of the poem "Palestine" occupied the attention of the Heber brothers and their guest whose literary star was in the ascendant. After hearing the long poem, the author of the "Border Minstrelsy" commented

You have omitted one striking circumstance
in your account of the building of the
temple, that no tools were used in its
erection.

Reginald retired from the breakfast table to a corner of the room and before the party separated, produced the beautiful lines which now form a part of the poem,

No hammer fell, no ponderous axes rung,
Like some tall palm, the mystic fabric sprung.
Majestic silence! ¹

This anecdote, of interest to the admirers of Scott as well as those of Heber, does not appear in "The Journal of Sir Walter Scott", but Mrs Heber acknowledged her indebtedness to him for it.² From the famous "Journal" we do receive an interesting

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D., Vol.I., p.30.

2 Ibid. p.30.

reaction from his meeting with Reginald, which is recalled to his mind, and recorded after reading the Bishop's "Indian Journal".

Mar.12, 1829.

I read Reginald Heber's Journal after dinner. I spent some merry days with him at Oxford when he was writing his prize-poem. He was then a gay young fellow, a wit, and a satirist, and burning for literary fame. My laurels were beginning to bloom, and we were both mad-caps. Who would have for(e)told our future lot?¹

After submitting the manuscript there was an interval of nearly two months before the decision as to the winner was made. It was a jubilant, but humble Reginald who wrote to his aged father at the end of May announcing his success.

My dear Father,

My joy at being declared victor has been redoubled by the hope that my exertions have afforded pleasure to you and my dear Mother. My success was an event which I did not in the least expect. I was gone down the river with another B.N. man when Cholmondeley and Rawstorne hailed us from the bank and told me the Proctors had been enquiring for me, and seeing me a good deal surprised, added the reason that I had gained the prize.

My competitors were pretty numerous. No less than 15 copies having been sent in besides my own. I have seen the V.C., the Sen.Proctor and the Poetry Professor who were so kind as to praise my lines very much.....
.....The Bishop (Principal of Brasenose) is I have reason to hope well satisfied with my verses. I have received a great many congratulations on my good fortune and which is still more work for me. It is the first time that any B.N.C. man has gained the verse prize.²

1 Tait, J.G., Editor, - The Journal of Sir Walter Scott
p.607.

2 Cholmondeley Collection - MS Letter.

The Encaenia at which prize winners of the English verse ("The Newdigate" since 1806), the Latin verse, and the English prose contests read their offerings is held in the University's Sheldon Theatre, designed by the great Sir Christopher Wren on the plan of the Theatre of Marcellus at Rome. An early nineteenth century writer observed,

On such occasions, when all the members of the University are seated in their respective places, according to their rank, and the solemnities are graced by the presence of ladies, and of strangers of distinction, the coup d'oeil is strikingly august and magnificent.¹

Among the distinguished men of position present were Lord Sidmouth; Lord Tenterden; Dr.Burgess, Bishop of Salisbury; Dr.Philpotts, Bishop of Exeter; Dr.Coplestone (later Bishop of Llandaff); and Dr.Whately (later Archbishop of Dublin). The good Rector Heber and his wife had driven in two days from Hodnet to be a part of the crowd of nearly four thousand people who filled the Sheldonian on 15th June, 1803 for the programme. It was a nervous time for all the Hebers and most of all for Reginald, who had been coached in his delivery by Richard who was seated near him ready to prompt if the need arose.

By an especially interesting coincidence it happened that two future Bishops of the Church of England in the See of Calcutta, India, followed each other in the programme! In later years Daniel Wilson, who was to go to Calcutta as its

1 Wade, W.M. - Walks in Oxford, p.466.

fifth Bishop, referred to this occasion.

Is it not a singular coincidence that Heber, my revered, able, and pious predecessor, delivered his poem of "Palestine", on the very day that I delivered my English prose essay on "Common-Sense"? I well remember as I came down from the rostrum, seeing Heber, who sat immediately behind, testifying his applause in the kindest manner, - 1

Of this occasion Bishop Wilson's biographer points out:-

There is something affecting in the picture of these two young aspirants, thus brought together in the morning of life, who were afterwards called to bear, "the heat and burden of the day" in the same far distant land: something also in the scrolls they held, characteristic of the men; the one, throwing over India the charm of poetry, piety, and a loving spirit; the other, stamping upon it the impress of scriptural supremacy and evangelical truth: - 2

A characteristic of Heber's life was his desire to cause no offence by his words if it could be avoided. As he came towards the rostrum he observed two young ladies of Jewish extraction, sitting in a conspicuous part of the theatre. In that split second he recalled some lines which reflected severely on their nation and he quickly decided to soften the passage as he proceeded. Richard, his brother, despite his evident brilliance, was no mind-reader and when Reginald attempted to change the lines as he came to them, he was checked by the diligent prompter, "so that he was forced to recite the

1 Bateman, Josiah - Life of Rgt.Rev.Daniel Wilson, D.D. p.69.

2 Ibid. p.69.

lines as they were originally written."

It was a proud hour for the elderly Rector and his wife.
As he wrote with restrained pride to his sister in London,

We could not visit the seat of the Muses on a more agreeable occasion than to see and hear our youthful poet in the rostrum where he acquitted himself much to the satisfaction of a crowded audience in the theatre and met with uncommon applause.¹

An eye-witness of this memorable occasion, John Wilson, in later years Professor of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh University, and a co-editor of "Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine" under the pseudonym of "Christopher North" wrote in that magazine a description of Reginald and his recitation. In his genial, fluent style he sings the praises of Heber.

None who heard Reginald Heber recite his "Palestine", in the magnificent theatre, will ever forget his appearance - so interesting and impressive. Reginald Heber's recitation, like that of all poets whom we have heard recite, was altogether untrammelled by the critical laws of elocution, and there was a charm in his somewhat melancholy voice, that occasionally faltered, less from a feeling of the solemnity, and even grandeur of the scene of which he was himself the conspicuous object - though that feeling did suffuse his pale, ingenuous, and animated countenance - than from the deeply-felt sanctity of his subject, comprehending the most awful mysteries of God's revelation to man. As his voice grew bolder and more sonorous in the hush, the

1 Cholmondeley, R.H. - The Heber Letters, p.142.

audience felt that this was not the mere display of the skill and ingenuity of a clever youth - the accidental triumph of an accomplished versifier over his compeers in the dexterities of scholarship - which is all that can be truly said at such exhibitions - but that here was a poet indeed - not only of bright promise, but of high achievement - one whose name was already written in the roll of the Immortals.¹

Granted that this was written almost a quarter of a century after the event, granted it was embodied in an article which memorialized the accomplishments of one beloved in life, and that the writer was in Oxford days one of the admiring circle which moved within the orbit of Reginald's personality, nevertheless a national reputation was created on that day. This is amply borne out by the facts associated with the name of Heber and the poem "Palestine".² That all hearers or readers were not so thoroughly impressed as Wilson may be seen in this quotation from an article reviewing Heber's Bampton Lectures, but in it the reviewer presents proof for the previous statements.

Of the prize poem "Palestine":-

It was not very original, nor very splendid, nor very ambitious. But it discovered much and accurate reading, great familiarity with our best poets, considerable facility in drawing upon their stores, and turning them to his own purpose, much taste in the selection of topics, great correctness of ear, and ease of composition; and above all, there breathed through the whole of the poem a spirit so tender, and gentle, and

1 Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, Nov. 1827, p. 619.

2 Vide Appendix 4 - Heber's poem, Palestine.

pure and domestic, as almost to ensure the writer a very high place in the regard of his readers. And, as far as we can judge of the state of public opinion, we are disposed to think that the poetic toils of Mr. Heber earned their appropriate wages with the great bulk of his countrymen. It inclined them to think favourably of the man and his efforts.¹

In this criticism of the lack of originality we recall the comment in this vein which his friend John Thornton had made on "The Prophecy of Ishmael", but to the majority of his audience he spoke with a freshness of viewpoint and illustration. The criticism that the poem was "not very ambitious" was unjustified.

Wilson gave prominent mention to "the charm in his somewhat melancholy voice that occasionally faltered from the deeply-felt sanctity of his subject". This was perhaps more flattering than the facts warranted. An unidentified college friend remarked of his delivery of poetry and literature in a group, "He never looked up at his hearers....with his eyes downcast and fixed, he poured forth in a measured intonation,". It was intriguing while perusing books in the Brasenose Library relating to Heber to find in a copy of G.V.Cox's "Recollections of Oxford" a handwritten marginal note opposite the sentence, "there was also such a peculiar charm in his recitation", (Heber's) the following statement:

not true for his recitation was remarkably bad as I was told by those who heard him. His friends were in despair: my brother (Edward T.S. Hornby (matric.1800) who was then at

1 British Review, Vol.X, No.XX, 1817, p.409.

B.N.C. and Ric. Heber, his brother were constantly at work to improve him.
signed George Hornby (matric.1808)¹

While these deficiencies may be granted - of style and of delivery - it must be admitted, as the "British Review" critic quaintly expressed it, - "the poetic toils of Mr. Heber earned their appropriate wages with the great bulk of his countrymen". George Bonner who, as a younger student, knew Reginald at Oxford wrote in his "Memoir of Heber",

Never did a prize-poem excite so general a sensation. It was not recited in the theatre, rewarded with the medal, printed for the benefit of admiring friends, and forthwith forgotten, which is the ordinary fate of such productions; but it was read by all, by many committed to memory, and it has since been set to music by an eminent professor (Oratorio "Palestine" Prof. Crotch, Music Professor, Oxford University) and translated into many languages;²

Another friend writes of these Oxford days in the following way:

At a time when, with the enthusiasm of the place, I had rather caught by heart than learnt "Palestine", and when it was a privilege to any one of any age to know Reginald Heber, I had the delight of forming his acquaintance.³

A contemporaneous letter dated 5 Dec. 1803, from Miss Elizabeth Iremonger to Miss Mary Heber of Weston, a cousin of Reginald, reveals the estimate placed by Society on the poem

1 Cox, G.V. - Recollections of Oxford. p.48.

2 Bonner, George - Memoir of the Life of Rgt. Rev. Reginald Heber, D.D. p.10.

3 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I, p.340.

and the field of her own interest when she chatters:

I thought I had mentioned in my last letter to you my nephew Frederic's having shewn me Mr Reginald Heber's "Palestine", which not to admire would be forfeiting all judgment and taste. It certainly exhibits great powers and genius, tho' I confess it is not the kind of Poem that would naturally interest me the most.¹

A further acknowledgment of its widespread acceptance may be found in a small book entitled "Enigmas", published in 1813, ten years after the memorable occasion in the Sheldonian Theatre. In a complete explanation of the purpose of the book, the title page states

Exercises for the Memory: An entire new set of Improving Enigmas, being The Forty English and Twelve Welch Counties, in Verse: including upwards of Three Hundred Different Events and anecdotes Selected from the Grecian, Roman, and English Histories, Mythology, Poetical and Dramatic Authors, also the Most Public Buildings and Places in and about London and Westminster.

Here in the repository of historic facts we find Heber's name used to supply the letter "H" in the enigma "SHROP" for the county Shropshire.

Then him who in each glowing line
Declares the woes of Palestine:
O charm us with his presence here,
And let his name salute our ear.²

The coupling here of Heber and "Palestine" in this little book

1 Bamford, F. - Dear Miss Heber, p.224.

2 Ritson, Anne - Enigmas, pp.19 and 94.

designed for social entertainment is eloquent testimony of the national reputation each had acquired by that time. Twenty-four years after "Palestine" was first presented, this statement of such recognition appeared in the "Quarterly Review":

Some few of our University English prize-poems have had an ephemeral reputation beyond the precincts of Cambridge and Oxford; but "Palestine" is almost the only one - that has maintained its honours unimpaired, and entitled itself, after the lapse of years, to be considered the property of the Nation.¹

That the passing of almost a century and a half has not extinguished the lustre of this poetic work may be found in the New Edition (1950) of "Chambers Encyclopaedia" where Heber, Reginald is credited with having "produced....perhaps the only prize poem, "Palestine", which holds a place in English Literature."²

With the delivery of "Palestine" before the filled theatre Heber's fame as a poet burst beyond the confines of Oxford into the society of England. But with this recognition and acclamation the testimony of those who knew him when he had reached this mountain peak experience of his university life reveals that the collegiate and public adulation showered upon him failed to spoil "the beautiful simplicity of mind" which was Heber's before and, even more important, after this exhilarating

1 Quarterly Review Vol.35 - 1827, p.451.

2 Chambers Encyclopaedia New Edit. Vol.VI, p.811.

experience. His humility was his guardian in this hour of distinction. This is well illustrated by an incident which was learned by his wife from his mother in later years:

When Reginald Heber returned from the theatre, surrounded by his friends, with every hand stretched out to congratulate, and every voice raised to praise him, he withdrew from the circle, and his mother, who, impatient of his absence, went to look for him, found him on his knees giving thanks to God, not so much for the talents which had, on that day, raised him to honour, but that those talents had enabled him to bestow unmixed happiness on his parents.¹

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D.
Vol.I., p.33.

Chapter Four

OXFORD UNIVERSITY 1803-1806
ALL SOULS COLLEGE

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OXFORD UNIVERSITY 1803 - 1806.
ALL SOULS COLLEGE.

The Long Vacation of the summer of 1803 held much promise for Reginald after the strain and excitement he had experienced at the close of his third year at Oxford. He looked forward to the family reunion at Malpas; a long delayed opportunity to visit John; days at Harrogate; social gatherings at the Wynns, the Corbets, the Hills and with the gentry of the county. A long summer of relaxation and enjoyment was in prospect, but always against the sombre background of renewed hostilities with France. The Peace of Amiens had been merely a breathing moment of rest between two great opponents. It ended on 18th May when after prolonged diplomatic stalling by Napoleon, Britain declared war. The so-called "Peace" had been used by the French dictator to renew his armies, navies and their supplies; the British had demobilized half their Army, disbanded the Volunteers, abolished the Sea Fencibles and reduced the Grand Fleet. The response in England to the declaration of war was spontaneous. Whatever differences there were, politically, economically, socially, and there were many in this age of swift transition in the life of a great and growing nation, a sense of unity and urgency throbbed through the life of England. The People and the Government saw two things clearly, Arthur Bryant has written:

They had given the experiment of peace with Bonaparte a fair and full trial and failed. They knew now that their conception of life and his could not survive together in the same world and that, since war between them was inevitable, it had better come in their

time rather than his. They had chosen their ground and they would stand on it.¹

And all Englishmen knew that they would have to defend their island home. Napoleon had been challenged!

The Addington Ministry immediately assumed the defensive and preparations were made to get as many men as possible into uniform as soon as possible to hold Bonaparte should he attempt to make beachheads of Sussex and Kent. The fastest and the cheapest way to get the greatest numbers was to enrol Militiamen or Volunteers; these could be raised by compulsory ballot in the former case and by an appeal to patriotism for the latter. Within a few days of its call, three hundred thousand Volunteers responded and overwhelmed by lack of necessary equipment, training officers and organization, the Cabinet at the end of July suspended the levee-en-masse. On 1st August, the seventy-five year old Rector of Malpas and Hodnet wrote to his sister the news that:

Our heroic trio are going this morning to Hodnet to meet Sir Corbet Corbet to confer with him about raising a regiment of Volunteers. I believe they want Richard to accept a commission of which I think he is not ambitious. And I trust Reginald and Thomas being bona fide resident members and students of the University are and ought to be excused and exempt. Perilous times these.²

1 Bryant, Arthur - Years of Victory p.44.

2 Cholmondeley, R.H. - The Heber Letters p.143.

And just a week later he wrote of "Captain" Heber and his rapid success in raising a Company of Hodnet Volunteers, and it is only ten days after that the news reached the aged Rector that Richard was very diligently practising military exercise morning and evening in London under the direction of a drill sergeant in the Guards.

Writing to John Thornton in the autumn, Reginald wished him success in his military career but suggested that he did "not utterly throw aside the gown for the sabre", as he intended to see if they were not compatible by studying and drilling by turns. As for the ultimate necessity of the Volunteers in his county, he added,

I do not apprehend that our services will be wanted, though, as Liverpool is an expected point of attack, we may in that case become really useful.

He commemorated this stirring period in a poem, "Honour Its Own Reward", the first stanza of which reflects his feelings and the nation's:

Swell, swell the shrill trumpet clear sounding afar,
Our sabres flash splendour around,
For freedom has summon'd her sons to the war,
Nor Britain has shrunk from the sound.¹

This poem, according to George Smith in his biography of Bishop Heber, was written at the request of Thomas Crewe Dod, Squire of Edge, a neighbour and friend of the Heber family. It was

1 Heber, Reginald - Poetical Works p.233.

sung, he states, the following morning at the meeting of the Volunteer Infantry Corps. This time for the creation of the poem is at variance with Heber's "Poetical Works", edited by Mrs Heber and published posthumously. She states it was written when Reginald was fourteen years old, which would place it in relation to the beginning of the war with republican France. There is no direct evidence to support either claim other than these statements. In most instances of difference it would appear that Mrs Heber would be the better authority, but in this particular case it seems that indirect evidence supports Smith. The biography of Bishop Heber by George Smith published in 1895 draws largely upon the "Life of Reginald Heber, D.D." and Heber's "Indian Journal", both compiled and edited by his wife. It develops a strong emphasis and claim for Bishop Heber as "Chief Missionary to the East". In addition it adds to the previous Heberiana by printing a number of letters to Charlotte Dod, a daughter of the above mentioned Squire Dod. A few do appear in Mrs Heber's two volumes of biography of her husband, but in a "mutilated form", but Smith contributes a number of other letters of that correspondence. He suggests others have disappeared and states that none of Charlotte Dod's letters to Heber seemingly still exist, having probably been destroyed. Smith appears to have found some evidence in the Dod papers which caused him to write:

It was while sitting at tea with Charlotte and the rest of the family that at her father's request Heber wrote these verses, which were sung at the meeting of the Volunteers Infantry Corps next morning.¹

An examination of the poem itself suggests a closer application to the sons of Britain fighting as Volunteers in defence of the homeland than as a reference to the Army crossing the Channel in 1793. The main theme is of free service to the nation, and the very title itself bears out that idea - "Honour Its Own Reward".

Reginald became acquainted with Charlotte Dod, one of the five daughters of the Squire of Edge, during that summer, according to Smith. As we have seen, he liked people but he tended to shy away from wholehearted participation in the balls of the neighbouring gentry and from social intercourse with any young woman. We have no direct evidence concerning any romantic interest which may have been held at this time either by the twenty year old Reginald, home from Oxford where he had ascended the peak of literary fame at the end of his third year in college; or by the young country lass of seventeen years. Smith suggests that Reginald, inspired by Charlotte, wrote the fragment of verse which begins with the lines:

Oh kind, and beautiful, and good,
Dear rose of blooming womanhood!²

1 Smith, George - Bishop Heber p.23.

2 Ibid. p.22.

and that some of his loveliest unpublished verses were written for successive anniversaries of her birthday.^{1, 2} Whether this attachment was of the nature of a first love for each; whether Reginald fell out of love and Charlotte still lived in hope; whether the first romantic interest faded and developed into a brother-and-sister relationship presents a question with insufficient evidence for a definite answer. Fourteen letters of this correspondence are reproduced in Smith's "Bishop Heber", only one of which was written before Reginald was a married rector and neighbour. This, from the autumn of 1806, began,

My Dear, dear Charlotte will perhaps be surprised that I have not sooner thanked her for her kind little note delivered at the Llanvridda Bow-meeting, especially when she knew I was immediately setting out for Oxford and likely to be alone.

The closing likewise hints of an interest on a level beyond that of a brother and sister, which had recently been present but had departed:

.....God bless you for ever. I can hardly say how often I think of you, and how much I value your affection and wish for your happiness. Dear, dear friend, adieu -

Ever yours,
R.H.³

This letter was written upon his return to England after over a year's absence on the Continent. For Reginald, his interest of

- 1 Vide Appendix 5 - I bless my Charlotte's natal day by Heber.
- 2 Smith, George - Bishop Heber p.68.
- 3 Ibid p.48.

the previous years (1803-05) may have changed, if we are not guilty of a misinterpretation of the slight evidence. Years later Heber referred to the friendly relationship which had continued for twenty years as "a friendship and correspondence sanctioned like ours by the wife of one party and the parents of the other"¹. The tone in the other thirteen letters of Reginald to Charlotte breathes a brother's affection and interest in her welfare in all activities of life. In at least one letter he signs himself as her "affectionate brother". That her friendship meant much to him is shown by the inclusion of her name, along with those of Thornton, C. Williams Wynn, Wilmot and Davenport, in a letter which was to be delivered to his wife in the event that death came to him during his first Indian journey.^{2, 3}

The autumn brought increased strain for the nation. With early October, the expectancy of invasion heightened. Accounts of tremendous invasion preparations by Napoleon were brought to England by Americans and other neutral travellers. The rumours and tension continued through November and December, until around Christmas new alarms made it seem certain that the awaited invasion was at hand. Plans were made for the evacuation of the

1 Ibid. p.120.

2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II.p.269.

3 Charlotte Dod remained unmarried until 1834, eight years after the passing of Heber. She then married a clergyman, who assumed her family name. She lived to be 81 years of age.

Queen and the Court to Worcester, where the gold from the Bank of England was to be stored in the Cathedral. But Napoleon was having difficulty with his preparations; the vaunted invasion fleet was not ready before the Channel was churned by the winter's gales. Responsibilities with the Volunteers under his brother's direction who were on the alert during these months engaged Reginald's attention along with his studies at Oxford. In the home, grave concern was being felt by all members of the Heber family for the health of the aged Rector. The seventy-five year old Rector and Squire suffered an attack of illness in mid-summer from which he partially recovered, but his strength did not return, and upon his relapse word was sent to Oxford for Reginald to hurry home for the last days of his father. Despite the great difference in their ages, the Rector had been a close companion to his children as they grew up and the dreaded hour of separation was only lightened by the saintliness of his spirit and the Christian faith they shared with him. The sharing of the Sacrament by the members of the family was his last request, and as he blessed them his spirit departed, leaving Reginald with an experience and a blessing which was to deepen and increase the natural spirituality he possessed. One can read the tremendously moving description of this experience which Reginald shared with his bosom friend and feel the vibrant feeling of the youth as he wrote, "He blessed us again; we kissed him and found his lips and cheeks cold and breathless.

O Thornton, may you (after many years) feel as we did then!"¹ Mrs Heber and her family left the Malpas rectory which had been the scene of so many happy years unmarred by sorrow and death and took up their new residence at Hodnet Hall. Richard, the eldest son and heir, succeeded his father as the Squire of Hodnet and of Marton in Yorkshire.

Returning to Brasenose College, Reginald attempted to settle himself once more into the study habits of an academic life, with the goal of passing the examinations necessary for the Bachelor of Arts degree. He spent the Easter vacation fagging (studying) as he described it "sometimes, rather hard, though never as much as I ought to do". Excerpts from a letter dated April 23, 1804, to Thornton reveal the state of his mind at this time.

.....my examination is to come on, I believe, in a few days. I have given up all idea of standing for honours, as my mathematical and, indeed my other studies have been interrupted this spring by, alas! too good a reason. In fact, to pass a tolerable examination, even in the most ordinary way, is by no means a trifling exertion. Perhaps, too, my ardour for academical distinction is a little cooled. My examination will be precipitated much sooner than I could wish, from a necessity of joining the corps I belong to, which is going out on permanent duty the tenth of next month. I have, however, during this time (Easter vacation) made myself pretty well master of Aristotle's ethics, and rhetoric, and have gone through a good deal of Aeschylus. Logic, alas! and mathematics sleep very quietly, and as a little of both is necessary, I believe I must trust to my memory for doing justice to some lectures I attended when a freshman.²

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I. p.38.

2 Ibid. p.38.

One can appreciate his feeling in coming up for final examinations with the considerable loss of time occasioned by the death of his father and the activities of the Volunteers necessitated by the renewed danger of a spring invasion. Not only was there a loss of time involved but both events were unsettling for concentrated study. His lack of interest in mathematics went back to Neasdon years - the subjects in which his friend shone at Cambridge were the difficult ones for Reginald. His first love was the Classics and a weakness of human nature is to spend more time on the studies one enjoys than on those one dislikes - this he always seemed to find himself doing. The composition books¹ in which young Heber outlined and analysed Aristotle's ethics and rhetoric and some of Aeschylus were given by him after passing this examination to one of his friends, John Mitford. He saved them along with later letters from Heber when Bishop in Calcutta to his brother R. Mitford, one of the Judges there. In each note-book there are several architectural sketches and house plans. Mitford identifies them as being designs for Heber's Rectory at Hodnet. Though they have a resemblance to the present rectory which was not built until 1812, these drawings suggest an interesting question. When did Heber first decide to enter the service of the Church? Was it in his teens, when he exhibited considerable mature interest in the affairs of the Church and the problems

1 British Museum MS.28, 322.

of its ministry, or was it in the emotional experience of the death of his father with a decision to assume "his cross and robe"? If these college notebooks were, as Mitford indicates, received by him from Heber after the examination was completed, and if these sketches are of the proposed Hodnet rectory, it is quite clear that the decision to become a servant of the Church had been reached prior to this date. It is a strange omission from any of the existing Thornton missives.

Evidently the sands ran through Father Time's hourglass faster than Heber had figured. Either his military duties called him away before he had taken his examinations or he felt he was not ready and decided to wait for the autumn. By mid-May he had left his beloved Brasenose, exchanging the young gentlemen students of the University for the sturdy young farmers of the Hodnet Volunteers. The transition was not an easy one, for as he wrote to John in a postscript,

May 26, 1804.

Pray let me hear something from you. I am now at Shrewsbury on permanent duty with a Volunteer Corps to which I belong and am so utterly out of my element that a letter from you would be doubly acceptable.¹

Despite the fact that many of the Volunteer Corps were posted in defence, the long delay caused invasion talk to subside in England although flurries of rumours from week to week ruffled the life of the south coast. There was little real alarm

1 Thornton Collection - MS Letter No.25.

although at this time the French army of invasion was assembled at Boulogne, waiting for a favourable moment when a French Fleet should have secured command of the Channel. The crisis continued. A change of British Government had dropped Addington, the defence minded minister, for Pitt, who was back thinking again of an English invasion of the Continent. In September the Hodnet Volunteers attended the battalion muster at Market Drayton and in the following month they participated in a regimental muster at Shrewsbury. Captain Richard Heber commanded the Hodnet Company, but, in his capacity as Lord of the Manor at Marton in Yorkshire, he had also been appointed Colonel of the Craven Legion. He, therefore, delegated his Shropshire duties to Reginald. "The Heber Letters" contains a section of eight letters regarding these two operations on which the twentyone year old Reginald was reporting to his brother, the nominal commander. It appears that the overall organization of the Volunteers was a rather haphazard and inefficient one.

These activities are of interest in that they present Reginald in a new role - an officer and leader of men in the Volunteers. The men of this Company are later to be under his parish supervision, but at this period they are looking to him as the brother of the landowner, the Lord of the Manor. It was not an easy role for the youth, as brief extracts from his reports reveal:

Several were inattentive this morning and two drunk, as I was told, though I do not know whether it was not mere stupidity. They grew

restive at my scolding them and fell out and ran off but have since humbled themselves.¹

To add to our misfortune Drayton is such a perfect brothel every night, that the men will lose, I fear, their morals and civility as well as their discipline. I shall I think almost entirely give up the point of attendance till the day of inspection, when a fine of half a crown shall be imposed on all non-attendants, and I shall take no excuses at all.²

On the day of inspection.....we recovered our credit entirely.³

The men went home on Friday very orderly and steady though they had got a good deal of drink at different places (bread, cheese and ale at Spoonley, a pint each at Ternhill) and thirdly, I had ordered them some at the "Bear" (Inn of Hodnet).

At the muster:

Our greatest plague was drunkenness which was sometimes very bad indeed; the Hodnet Company behaved, I think, the best particularly in this respect.....except in one case where I was obliged to drag the offender by the collar to the guard house.⁴

Harvest has lamed some and made several slovenly, and the pieces in particular have suffered by it. This morning they were shamefully dirty.⁵

I have just proposed the march to Shrewsbury to the men, who cheered very heartily, they asked if you went with them, I said I did not know for certain but hoped so. Do come for God's sake.⁶ (And Reginald's sake!)

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- 1 Cholmondeley, R.H. - The Heber Letters, p.146.
 - 2 Ibid. p.147.
 3. Ibid. p.148.
 4. Ibid. p.148.
 5. Ibid. p.149.
 6. Ibid. p.150.

I got down on Sunday and yesterday marched here on a very fine day, and not too hot, we mustered eighty-eight rank and file, the men clean and orderly.¹

I marched with them the whole way and was delighted with their general conduct and their marching. T.Hulson however seemed likely to give some trouble, he had a hat slung behind his haversack and somebody (Lawton I think) put a clod into it. Hulson turned round and struck Hooley and threw down his musket and wanted to strip to fight. I collared him and shook him for four or five minutes heartily and threatening him with the Black Hole at Shrewsbury, he begg'd pardon and harmony was restored, at the same time I scolded Lawton for putting in the clod.....Our system is now settled thus, half past six in the morning exactly we muster then drill till eleven, then muster again with side arms at half past one. Dine at six.....

This morning and yesterday the men behaved admirably in the field, all the field officers rode up to thank them and all the Companies were told to imitate their example.²

The letters with their coverage of activities of the men reflect credit on the acting leader, Reginald Heber. After a poor start the company discipline improved until it was considered an an example to others. Reginald, it is revealed, could physically enforce his orders if necessary! On the whole this was a valuable experience for one who was to be an understanding leader of men.

One of Heber's most satisfying experiences occurred upon his return to Oxford, when on the day following All Souls Day

1 Ibid. p.150.

2 Ibid. p.152.

(2nd November, 1804), he was elected a Fellow of All Souls. This was prior to his taking his examinations for his B.A. Since his first year in college when he had expressed his feelings to Thornton on the desirability of becoming a Fellow with the opportunity for study in pleasant surroundings and in stimulating fellowship, Heber had desired to follow the lead of his brother and his father and gain this Honour. The election to All Souls was a happy one for him and for the College, as distinction was to come to both by this association. In time his name was to be acknowledged as that of a Worthy of All Souls. When Professor Montagu Burrows wrote his excellent treatise on the history of All Souls, in 1874, he made two comments on the association of Heber with this historic college of Oxford University:

Heber, the delight of his generation, will always take rank among the best Worthies of All Souls. His brilliant career is too recent, his excellent Life, by his widow, too well known, his memory even yet too fresh among living men, to make this the place for any detailed mention of him. (and this almost half a century after his unexpected death!)Traditions of his genial disposition and fund of elegant and playful humour are still handed down from his contemporaries. In him they were compatible with the earnestness of a martyr and the enthusiasm of a scholar.¹

Upon his election he moved across the square and took up his residence at All Souls. In a letter to his friend at Cambridge, he stated:

1 Burrows, Montagu, - Worthies of All Souls pp.420-421.

I even now begin to find the comfort of my new situation, which is, for any young man, particularly if he reads at all, certainly most enviable.....Talking about fagging, I have been fagging lately, though not near so much as I ought to have done after a long vacation of military idleness, - idleness at least with respect to the main pursuits of my life. My examination will, I believe, come on in a very few days; I have, indeed, sent in my name nearly a month ago, and have been during that whole time in the pleasure of suspense. Any serious plan of study, when a man expects every day a summons to the schools, would be impossible. I have been trying my hand at logic, but soon threw it down in absolute disgust; the barbarous terms, the ridiculous methods of conveying information, and the lumber with which everything is crowded and blocked up, are quite too much for me.¹

The emphasis on fagging is worthy of note at this point.

The New Examination Statutes passed in Oxford in 1800 ushered in a new era in the significance of Oxford degrees. While young Heber makes no comment on his examination experience, a young contemporary, Richard Dod Baker (Brasenose matric.1801), provides us with a very interesting glimpse of the new method employed by the University. This letter was dated 10 Dec.1801:

I dare say little as you know of this seat of learning you have heard that our examinations for degrees have always hitherto been laughed at as trifling and a mere matter of form, but now they have assumed a very serious aspect, and as your cousin is to take one you will not deem the following short account of the end Examination, I have to undergo at all improper. There is now a large room fitted up for the purpose which will contain, I should imagine, 300 persons, there are benches for the Vice-Chancellor, Proctors, Drs. Heads of Colleges,

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I pp.39 & 40.

and Halls etc., who are all required to attend at this most solemn occasion, and about 200 auditors. There are perhaps six examined at a time and this occupies from 9 in the morning till 3 in the afternoon; so that whoever thinks of taking a degree must fag.¹

And fag Reginald did! The examination before his contemporaries was finally taken and passed; and in just about the manner that he had anticipated. Christopher North, in retrospect, frankly stated:

His examination for the bachelor's degree, although not so much distinguished as that of many others, for accurate remembrances of the manifold divisions and subtleties of Aristotle's philosophical works, by the solution of syllogisms out of Aldrich's logic, or of mathematical problems, was brilliant in the oratory and poetry of Greece. But his reputation was then so great and high, that no public exhibition of that kind could increase or raise it.²

Reginald Heber was granted his Bachelor of Arts degree by Oxford University on 6th December 1804.

With the beginning of the new year Reginald settled down in his new surroundings to enjoy to the fullest the opportunity for study and scholarship. He had previously indicated his intention to give a steady application to his divinity studies for the following three years and to receive his Master's degree at the end of that time. A deviation in his long range plans was soon made. England had shifted in her military

1 Brasenose Quatercentenary Monographs p.64.

2 Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine Nov.1827, p.620.

policy from the defensive to the offensive, at least on the diplomatic front. Early in the year a coalition was in formation of Great Britain, Russia and Austria, against Napoleon. John Thornton and Reginald Heber about this time decided to spend some time in the following summer travelling on the Continent. It had been the custom for wealthy young men to make the "Grand Tour of Europe" as a final phase of their education before settling into their roles in the country or city life. For a decade, with the exception of the summer of the Peace of Amiens, there had been no opportunity for such travel except in cases of business or necessity. If normal conditions had prevailed their interests would have led them through France and Switzerland into Italy with its vast display of Classical antiquities, but this was not possible. With Russia much more favourably disposed to England than previously, the northern part of Europe was open to venturesome travellers, with seeming political safety. Plans were evidently formed by the youths during these months, for they started on a Northern Tour in July.

Before finishing the academic year at Oxford, Heber won the University bachelor's prize for the English prose essay. In submitting "The Sense of Honour", Reginald wrote of his belief, showing with much of the grace and charm which characterized his later writings that a sense of honour is not incompatible with Christian humility. He examined first the nature and propriety of a Sense of Honour, and then submitted its merits to

the final test of tried and general utility. In this essay he was expressing himself - the Heber who lived by this belief in all his relations of life. And in days when a false code of honour dominated all sections of society, we can see that he was in advance of his time.

The lads left England in July 1805 for a lengthy tour which took them through the Scandinavian countries into Russia and the Crimea and returned them through Poland and central Europe, to Germany and thence to England. They were gone from here for fifteen months, covering several thousand miles under conditions which present day tourists would term primitive. The steam railroads were in their early stage of development in England and their land travel on the Continent was done entirely by horse and carriage of various types. The length of time involved in their travels and the necessity of being dressed for all sorts of occasions from descending a mine to being presented at court necessitated their carrying much luggage with them. After reaching the Continent, they engaged a servant who accompanied them handling the multitudinous details concerned with travel and living.

The tour proved to be a rich experience for the two twenty-two year old youths. Previous preparation had provided them with a number of letters of introduction to English diplomatic representatives and prominent personages in the first of the countries they were to visit. In this Richard Heber and Thornton's father, with other friends, had been most

helpful.¹ Soon after starting, Reginald dispatched a request to Richard asking if he "could get letters of introduction from Prince William of Gloucester and Sir Sidney Smith". Upon presenting letters and proving by their charm and youthful enthusiasm distinctive representatives of their country, they were provided by their new hosts with further letters of introduction. These paved the way for them to enjoy many unusual experiences in every country they visited. Both lads proved excellent correspondents with their families and in addition Reginald kept extensive notes in a journal with "tolerable care" for he wrote, they "may help me in many a winter evening's discussion". His talent for sketching came in handy for young Heber on this trip, since in this pre-camera period he could capture the scenes and interesting picturesque characters they met on his every ready sketch pad, and later in the leisure of England he could finish the drawings and tint them as illustrations for the letters they had written. He carried his drawing materials in a black leather bag hanging from his shoulder and used them whenever the opportunity allowed.

The two friends shared an enthusiastic interest in people and places, and as eager young travellers they met the difficulties of the road with humour and resilience. On one occasion in the Crimea their drivers turned from the main road.

1 John Thornton (1720-90), grandfather to John, had been a Director of the Russia Company.

When the lads remonstrated they were assured that the new road was a short cut to their destination. However, John wrote,

Some suspicions, I confess, crossed my mind and I accordingly examined the primings of my pistols as much to let them see I was armed as to prepare for defence. Heber meanwhile displayed a dirk.¹

The road soon proved bad, and after consultation with some peasants the driver turned the carriage round and ended all their suspicions of an intention to rob them.

On another occasion an alarm was given that a band of seventy armed Circassians were hovering on the river side. They proceeded with their swords drawn and pistols primed, as Heber expressed it, "in all the novelty and dignity of danger but without the satisfaction of having even a skirmish".² On other occasions they met with the petty annoyances at the borders with visas and passport control and the leech-like official seeking to extort bribes for his services. In most cases they were comfortably provided for at inns or as guests in private homes, but when such accommodations were not theirs they adjusted to what was offered; as in Norway once they slept on boards covered by deer skins and in Hungary, Heber records that he slept on the kitchen floor amid the Jewish innkeeper's family, while Thornton preferred the carriage!

1 MS. copy of original Thornton travel letters, p.126.

2 Ibid. p.153.

The two lads proved to be keen observers not only of scenery and the usual historic places but of social, agricultural and industrial conditions. They eagerly accepted every opportunity to visit mines, travelling deep into the excavations of copper and iron ore mining projects. After one of these trips the only regret they expressed was that it would not be possible to make the trip down by moonlight! They carefully observed an alum works, and went through a linen manufactory and a cotton factory, especially noticing the use of new English machinery. In Russia they made a number of visits to prisons, hospitals and orphanages. While all their social contacts were in the upper classes, they disproved any charge of snobbery by showing a constant keen interest in the living and social conditions they found in each country through which they journeyed. In Norway they were impressed with the remarkable neatness and cleanliness of the cottages and farm houses, observing meanwhile that a prevailing vice among the peasantry was drunkenness; and after a visit to a prison with an official, Heber exclaimed,

A pretty government this, where a man is shut up for his whole life, and three or four different reasons given for his imprisonment, all equally uncertain.¹

Crossing into Russia from upper Sweden (now Finland) he commented,

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I. p.70.

You see an immediate deterioration in morals, cleanliness, wealth and everything but intelligence and cunning.¹

In Moscow they were generously entertained, living much of the time with M.Karamsin, whose travels in Europe had been reviewed in the Edinburgh Review of January 1804. When the time came to continue their tour, Heber wrote,

On the whole, if it were not for the prospects before me, I should look upon what I am leaving with regret, as I always shall with esteem, as the seat of much real hospitality, good humour, and good manners.²

His first impression of the ladies of that city was greatly revised,

It is the only place since I left England where I have met with a really interesting female society, and at the assemblies of the nobles we see many faces that might be supposed to belong to Lancashire or Cheshire.³

Before they left Moscow, two of their hostesses, Countess Pouschkin and Princess Dashkof, gave them many cautions, about overheating themselves, not to get their feet wet, and never to go thinly clad; all of which caused Reginald to write in a letter to his mother, "You see good advice and good old ladies may be met with in every part of the world." If the ladies of Moscow society reminded him of those at home, he also saw women toiling in a role unfamiliar in English life. From Sweden

1 Ibid. p. 95.

2 Ibid. p.193.

3 Ibid. p.167.

early in the tour he wrote,

You will be surprised to hear women reckoned as part of the crew; but here nothing is more common. In Stockholm, indeed, the boats are all managed by women; and a man would no more dream of rowing than he would of knitting stockings, or suckling a child.¹

Some months later from Gallicia, he comments, here,"for the first time in my life, I saw women holding the plough and breaking stones on the highway."²

Reginald and his companion, as we have indicated, were interested in a wide range of subjects. When they could, they attended the theatre, the French theatre in St.Petersburg, and the German theatre in Vienna; in the former city they spent much time in the famed Hermitage viewing the extensive collection of oils which had been recently brought to Russia; they collected a number of songs, translated pieces of poetry, visited bookshops when they found them, and seriously studied German, in anticipation of their visit to that country. Out of all of their varied interests of a more serious nature there are two which are accounted for by their interests at home. The first, concerned things of religion, the churches, the services and the clergy. Both were serious in their religious interest and Reginald, anticipating his studies of divinity, had a keen

1 Ibid. p.90.

2 Ibid. p.280.

interest in observing the display of religious life. In Russian Finland, learning that the Lutheran Clergy enjoyed a great authority over the minds of the people, he sought the reason for it, and was told "that much of this popularity was derived from the style of preaching". This he describes as:

enthusiastic and ranting in the extreme. This species of oratory is, however, well adapted to the people they address, who are by far the most miserable and least civilized of any part of Russia.¹

A grand religious ceremony of the Tartars was witnessed by the youths at the court of the Emperor at St. Petersburg. They went, as they said, as spectators only, since there was no English Ambassador there to introduce them, but an introduction to the master of ceremonies enabled them to have an excellent view of the proceedings. Reginald, especially, was much impressed, we gather from his comment,

After the bishop had given the final blessing, I was surprised to see a beautiful princess, for I really think her very much so, kiss his hand, which he returned on her hand and cheek; and his example was followed by the whole tribe of ecclesiastics, a race of as dirty monks as ever ate salt fish. The English clergy will, I fear, never be able to obtain a privilege like this.²

One of the highlights of all their experiences and one which he was to recall in India was their visit to the Archbishop of Moscow, Plato, one of the few learned divines in the Eastern

1 Ibid. p.96.

2 Ibid. p.130.

Church, the first person who introduced a habit of preaching into the Russian churches. He coincided very much, both in appearance and manner, with their ideas of a primitive bishop; they felt, even his circumstances seemed primitive too! The Archbishop, they discovered, spoke tolerable French and Latin, but Greek more readily, so it was in this language they "had a long and very interesting conversation with him on the history and internal state of Russia." The Russian Easter season found them in Tcherkask and it proved to be of great interest. Both young men wrote vivid descriptions home to their folks describing the Palm Sunday, the Good Friday, Easter-eve, and the Easter morn services. Of the Easter-eve service John wrote,

On the Saturday night at 12 o'clock people began to assemble in the Church to await the dawn of Easter. We went there alone and continued standing till day break in the Gallery, hearing a beautiful Anthem and looking down upon the Gilded bonnets of the women thro' the smoke of immense and innumerable tapers till our heads were turned. At day break some cannons were fired on a battery and directly the priests ranged themselves in a row. The Attaman then saluted each of them in order according to their rank, saying, in answer to their 'Christ is risen', 'He is risen indeed'. After him followed the other officers all in full uniform, and then the Congregation. Those who had passed the priest began to give coloured eggs to each other, and to renew the salutation with the same expression.¹

The whole colourful dramatic scene seemed to Reginald "altogether what a poet or a painter would have studied with delight".

1 MS. copy of original Thornton travel letters, p.144.

The second interest paramount in the keen minds of these two friends was the military one. Both were members of the Volunteer Corps, and while the emphasis at home on defence had shifted to offence, both had the feeling that their days of military service were not yet over. From Cronstadt in Russia, Reginald writing of their plans stated:

(We shall) return much sooner than we at first intended to our respective volunteers; pray commend me to the Hodnet Company, and tell them I am doing my utmost to gain information which may be useful to them, if they are ever brought into action; and the more I see of the miserable State of Europe, I am the more convinced that Englishmen will shortly have to depend on their own patriotism, and their own bayonets.¹

In the summer after Reginald and John had left their homeland for Sweden, Napoleon was on the verge of launching his invasion attack across the Channel on England. On the 20th July he reached the point of ordering the Grand Army to embark. Boats were available at Boulogne for not only the 90,000 troops already at the water side but for another 60,000, if needed. The fear of invasion was again a reality in England. The Volunteers were called out and the shore defences were redoubled. It was at this crucial time that the British Fleet turned the tide and succeeded in blockading the united French and Spanish fleet. Early in September the news reached England that Napoleon had been forced to break camp across the Channel and

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D.
Vol.I., p.132.

to hurry off to meet a new threat from a Russian Army. After two years of suspense England was no longer in danger. Pitt's diplomacy and the English "wooden walls" had saved the country. Napoleon, divining the plan for Austria and Russia to link forces, had ordered five great armies to converge on them and beat them before they could meet. Eight days after Lord Nelson and the Fleet had added a brilliant chapter to British naval history, the disastrous news reached England that Napoleon's armies moving with lightning speed under the cloak of secrecy had dealt crushing blows to the Austrian Army before it had joined forces with the Russian Army. Early in December the Allies were shattered at Austerlitz; seven weeks later England mourned the loss of its war leader, William Pitt. His party could not supply the leadership for the Government and the resultant "Ministry of All Talents" was formed by the new Whigs and the old - the Grenvilles and Foxites. Lord Grenville, Pitt's cousin, was the new Prime Minister but the real leader was Fox. The new leaders sought peace and Napoleon resorted to guile to trick England but this ruse was seen through by Fox, after the negotiations had hung fire for several months,

In mid-August Reginald and John left Vienna very melancholy with the news and rumours of Bonaparte's new encroachments and menaces. "All the Austrians joined in saying that the only hope of safety for England was in continuance of the war; and I was perfectly of the same opinion".¹ From Vienna they went to Brunn,

1 Ibid. p.314.

and spent a whole day in tracing out and drawing plans of the battle of Austerlitz. Because of this activity and his questioning of a farmer in the vicinity Heber was taken for a French spy by the farmers, who gathered round him demanding to see his passport. The "village council of war" was terminated by the arrival of Thornton with the guide and the necessary explanations. The last lap of the tour was through Prague into Germany. At Dresden, a sleepless night caused by the march of Prussian troops going to meet the French stirred Heber's Muse and the beginning of his poem "Europe" was made. They journeyed from Leipzig to Halle, where they visited the University at which Thornton's father had spent some years; to Wittemberg; thence to Potsdam with its famed Sans Souci; and so to Berlin, which Reginald described as "next to Petersburg, the finest city I have ever seen." A month later, on 14th October, the much travelled friends reached Yarmouth, England from Hamburg and young Heber despatched a brief note home to Hodnet, stating their safe arrival and

We bring no good news. The King of Prussia and Bonaparte were a few posts from each other, and by this time they have probably had an engagement.¹

On that day the armies of Napoleon defeated the Prussian Army at Jena, giving Bonaparte possession of the whole of Prussia.

Several thousand miles, innumerable experiences, and over fifteen months after leaving their homeland the travellers

1 Ibid. pp.318-9.

returned. As Reginald had written mid-way along their itinerary, "It is the desire of improvement not the love of rambling" which kept them going amidst the trials and tribulations of travel in distant countries unused to young men who travelled "for improvement". They returned with copious notes and sketches of strange and interesting places and people, but more than that, their keen observant minds had tasted and digested the mental food and drink of travel in strange countries with all kinds of people and new customs. They had absorbed the experiences of travel and were better men for it, and England had been well represented in far lands by two of her finest young men.

England was engaged in a general election. John hurried to his home to throw his help into the fray on behalf of his father's and his uncle's campaigns for re-election.

Reginald stopped at Oxford to see his brother and to offer his assistance in the efforts of Brasenose College to get him elected in a tri-cornered contest to the University Seat. During his brief visit at Hodnet to his mother and sister, the farmers and the people of the village "made a great feast for the volunteers, their wives and families, on the occasion of 'Master Reginald's coming back safe'". Reginald, moved by the tribute and recalling scenes of the previous year, in writing to Thornton commented:

How I do love these good people! if my friends had made a feast for me, it would have been to be expected; but that the peasants themselves should give a fete champêtre to their landlord's younger

brother would, I think puzzle a Russian.¹

A letter to Charlotte Dod in that month describes his activities on behalf of his brother; letter writing to members of the University having votes in the forthcoming contest and to others to exert their influence on behalf of his brother; attending committees frequented by many public characters and literary men of different political parties.

We have had Ward, Walter Scott, Hobhouse (Lord Sidmouth's Secretary, not the Radical), Bowles, the poet, Lord Spencer, all the Williams Wynns, etc., in the room at once. Great exertions are making on the other side, and some abominable lies have been told. I suppose such things are usual in all elections, but the charges brought against my brother of being a Radical and I know not what have made me sometimes very angry.²

As is seen here, Richard, now the Squire of Hodnet and Marton, was on his way to achieving a place of promise in London and Oxford. Primarily he was a Book Collector and as such he is best known in the nineteenth century scene of English culture.³

A reader of wide interests with an excellent classical background, he had early developed an interest in rare books which became the major passion of his life. He was a mere lad of ten when he expressed a wish to his father for

"Mr Glasse's Caractacus" - a very scarce book, but I believe it is at Mr. Betham's sale where I would be much obliged to you to go, there being the very best editions of the classics of all sizes.⁴

1 Ibid. p.321.

2 Smith, George - Bishop Heber, p.48.

3 Dictionary of National Biography, Vol.XXV, pp.357-8.

4 Cholmondeley, R.H. - The Heber Letters, p.25.

Six months later he reminded his father, "You was so good to promise me that you would give me something towards Bell's Poets at Christmas." (Bell's British Poets was published in 109 volumes!). The interest and habit grew steadily so that by the time Richard was fifteen the Rector wrote a note of remonstrance and warning to his loved son and heir:

I cannot say I rejoice in the importation of the cargo of books you mention from abroad, we had before enow and too many, ten times more than were ever read or even looked into. Of multiplying books, my dear Richard, there is neither end nor use. The Cacoethes of collecting books draws men into ruinous extravagances. It is an itch which grows by indulgence and should be nipt in the bud.¹

The sturdy Rector was a prophet - his prediction came true - the warning was not taken.

Richard, now a close friend of Walter Scott, was beginning to move in the smart literary circles of the capital city. His friends were many and influential. However, not enough of them were to be found in Oxford, for when the election returns were counted, he was third, following Charles Abbot and Sir William Scott, who were returned for Oxford. Dr. Frodsham Hodson termed his vote "a glorious minority - a testimony thus given to the world of what personal influence can do." While Richard received the news of his defeat with feelings very different from wounded pride or disappointed ambition, Reginald was more depressed by his failure. Thornton's father was also defeated

1 Ibid. p.52.

after a long period of unselfish service on behalf of his constituency.

With the activity and excitement of the election over, Reginald adjusted readily to the leisure and quiet study habits which he had enjoyed prior to leaving on his jaunt to foreign lands.

With regard to my studies, I am now post varios casus set down to them again in good earnest, and so delightfully situated in All Souls, that the very air of the place breathes study. While I write I am enjoying the luxuries of a bright coal fire, a green desk, and a tea-kettle bubbling. Good heavens! What should we have thought of such a situation at Tcherkask or at Taganrog. I have just had a very long conversation with Bishop Cleaver (Principal of Brasenose) about orders, and the course of study and preparation of mind necessary for these. He has I think fixed my resolution to go on in my present intentions.¹

This last sentence does not appear in the "Life", but is significant in showing that a decision was made following a period of seeming indecision or question at least. His studies in divinity and for his Master's degree continued at All Souls. In an undated 1807 letter of this period he concluded:

You will be glad to hear that I now shirk volunteers, shun politics, eschew architecture; study divinity as employment and draw costumes for relaxation.²

In a letter to John probably written prior to 7th June, 1807, which concerns John's new found happiness in being engaged, he

1 Thornton Collection - MS.Letter No.28.

2 Ibid. Letter No.33.

mentions his studies and that he had been troubled in his mind as he delved deeper into theology.

I am glad almost to have this break in my studies, as I was beginning to perplex myself with several useless doubts, which had once almost frightened me from taking priest's orders. The more I read of the Scriptures, the more I am convinced that John Calvin and his master, St. Augustine, were miserable theologians; but I hope I am not deceiving myself in the idea that I may still conscientiously subscribe to the articles, which may well, I think, admit an Arminian interpretation. Episcopius thought so even of the rules of doctrine in Holland. I hope I am not wrong. I had no doubts of this sort when I took deacon's orders;¹ but I have since met with a little work by a man whom they call here an "Evangelical preacher" (allow me still to dislike this use of the word) who has deduced from our liturgy, doctrines enough to frighten one. I hope and trust for God's guidance, pray for me, my dear friend, that I may have my eyes open to the truth whatever it may be; that no interest may warp me from it; and that if it pleases God that I persevere in His ministry, I may undertake the charge with a quiet mind and good conscience. This is now my purpose; may it be profitable to myself and to many.²

In this self-revealing letter Reginald Heber shows the doubts which plagued his mind as he prepared himself for the ministry. It was this very point of interpretation which was to be the basis of a low attack upon his theology after his death. The doubts were reconciled in his mind and the evidence of his life is that he undertook "the charge with a quiet mind and a good conscience" and that he was guided by God. In 1807 he was ordained priest and was presented by his brother to the family living of Hodnet which had remained vacant since the death of his father.

1 Prior to June, 1807; exact date not available.

2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. pp.336-7.

Chapter Five

THE COUNTRY RECTOR
HODNET 1807-1823

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Hodnet 1807-1823.

On the Continent Napoleon remained supreme, even though his forces for the first time had been held in a pitched battle by the Russians when he had ordered a winter invasion of Poland. The blow to his prestige had been great. It was an opportunity for the Allies but the "Ministry of All the Talents" was not up to it. After the end of the peace negotiation it seemed to lack a reason for being and it fell on 18th March 1807. To its credit it must be noted that one of its final acts was to abolish the African slave trade. That night, 23rd February, when the final debate on this world important issue was held, John Thornton and Reginald Heber were two of the spectators crowded into the gallery to witness William Wilberforce's crowning success. The slavery issue had been one in which he had long been vitally interested and in the debates in Parliament it was John's Uncle, Henry Thornton, M.P. for Southwark, who had been Mr. Wilberforce's right hand assistant. Mention of Heber's presence is found in the "Life of Wilberforce" published after his death by his sons. His diary is quoted in the following excerpt:

Feb. 23, 1807.

At length (The House) divided, 283 to 16.
A good many came over to Palace Yard after
House up and congratulated me. John Thornton
and Heber, Sharpe, Macauley, Grant and Robert

Grant, Robert Bird and William Smith, who were in the gallery.¹

Much is made of this meeting by the sons in favour of their father's personality and spirit, as they state it was Reginald Heber's first introduction to Mr. Wilberforce and that he had entered the room with a strange suspicion of his principles, but he had left saying to John Thornton, "How an hour's conversation can dissolve the prejudice of years!" It must be noted that the diary only states "Heber" which might refer to Richard instead of Reginald. However, it is more likely that it would have been Reginald with John, than the elder brother, although he knew the Thorntons and had visited at their home, and he delighted in attending important debates in Parliament. The expression "prejudice of years" seems unlike Reginald Heber, yet as a youth he had a strong love for the Church and an equally strong dislike of anything or anyone tainted with disaffection for it. It has been suggested that Heber, residing in the same parish with Sir Richard Hill, imagined that his sentiments, which he deemed disaffected to the Church, were shared by Mr. Wilberforce. Whatever the reason, it must be remembered that in that exclamation Reginald, if it were he, spoke as a young man in his early twenties.²

1 Wilberforce, Robert I. and Samuel - Life of Wilberforce p.298.

2 John Campbell Colquhoun in his interesting study of "William Wilberforce, His Friends and His Times", 1866, evidently lost sight of Heber's youth in his account of the same incident. Colquhoun states

It seems probable that Reginald was in London at about this time and staying with his elder brother, in view of the letter from the famed Rev. Sydney Smith to Richard which is quoted from the "Heber Letters".

9 March 1807

I would have called upon the Bard but I understand you in general forbid morning visits, so pray set that to rights between Mr. Reginald and me, who by the way seems to be a very good fellow, a coarse appellation but means in my dictionary so many excellent things that I am sure neither you nor he would be affronted if I were to interpret it.¹

Reginald Heber preached his first sermon as the Rector of Hodnet, successor to his revered father, in mid-summer 1807. It was a joyous occasion for the people of the parish to welcome as their spiritual leader one whom they had known from early youth as a son of the Squire, a quiet likeable lad who had grown to win their respect as a leader in the local Volunteers and at the University where he had achieved a large measure of fame. It was with mixed emotions that Reginald assumed the living of Hodnet over which his father had presided in the dual relationship of Squire and Rector for seventeen

"Reginald Heber was a man of refined pursuits and elegant tastes. He had long watched the course of Wilberforce from his quiet rectory at Hodnet." p.168. Reginald was still at All Souls and had not as yet become a Rector. He also states that on this occasion he was drawn by chance into Wilberforce's circle. It was John Thornton who brought him, not "chance".

1 Cholmondeley, R.H. - "The Heber Letters" pp.215-6.

years. To follow the leadership of the elderly priest as guide and counsellor to the nearly eighteen hundred people living within the bounds of the parish was a large order for his son of twenty-four years. Knowing them and being known by them for so many years made his role easier in some respects and in others it offered possible complications. The first Sunday service was approached with some trepidation by the young rector. One senses the happy feeling of relief and the feeling of humility which filled him following his experience as he wrote to his companion of school and travel days:

York, 7th August 1807.

My Dear Thornton,

I purposely delayed writing to you till I had some little Experience of my new situation as Parish Priest, and my feelings under it. With the first I have every reason to be satisfied; my feelings are I believe the usual ones of young men who feel themselves entering into the Duties of a Profession in which their Life is to be spent. I had no new Discoveries to make in the Character of my People as I had passed all my former life among them. They received me with the same Expressions of Good Will as they had shown me on my Return to England, and my Volunteers and myself (for we are still considered as inseparable) were again invited to a Fete Champêtre. Of course my First Sermon was numerously attended (I did not give them "Thy Kingdom Come")¹ and though tears were shed I could not attribute them entirely to my eloquence, for some of the old servants of the Family, began crying before I had spoken a word. I will fairly own that the cordiality of these honest people, which at first elated and pleased me exceedingly, has since been the occasion of

1 He did, however, do so a month later.

some very serious and melancholy reflection. It is really an appalling thing to have so high Expectations formed of a Young Man's future conduct. But I confess this has not so much weight with me as a fear that I shall not return their affection sufficiently or preserve it in its present extent by my exertions and diligence in doing Good. God knows I have every motive of affection and emulation to animate me, and have no possible excuse for a failure in my Duty. But I am well aware that either to build a house or manage a church requires a little further help than ones own.¹

One could not ask for a better attitude on the part of a young clergyman toward his parish, himself or God. The clarion notes of sincerity and humility which were to be the "leit-motif" of his life symphony were clearly expressed here.

Further on in the same letter he mentioned that he only stayed a fortnight with his parishioners before his Mother induced him to accompany her, along with Mary and Tommy, into Yorkshire on a round of visits to their relatives. She had, he wrote, looked forward to such a journey with her children as one of the chief comforts of his return to England. She showed a mother's natural pride in which Reginald was willing to indulge her even if it meant "proceeding to run the gauntlet, through a long list of cousins in all the three Ridings."!

When this series of visitations was over he returned to take up residence in his parish, where he lived at Hodnet Hall with his mother and sister. Oxford, having instituted new

1 Thornton Collection MS. Letter No.36.

public examinations for the Bachelor degree at the turn of the century, abolished them for the Master's degree in 1807, so Heber escaped having to stand for it, and received his M.A. on 7th April, 1808, after the lapse of the usual interval and the payment of the fees.

Properly to assess the fifteen year ministry of Reginald Heber in the parish of Hodnet, Shropshire, we need more than an understanding of his growth and development. It is necessary to have a view of the religious life of the nation at the beginning of the nineteenth century. What was the state of religion? What was the condition in the churches of England; and how did its clergymen measure up to their work in the face of national and international problems? With the answers to these questions as a background we may be better able to recreate the personality and character of this country rector whose pastoral and pulpit ability, ambitious scholarship, and sincere devotion to duty so well prepared him to be a brilliant ornament to his Church in the service of God, during the brief span of his life.

Religion in nineteenth century England was the recipient of a dual legacy from its moribund predecessor. One gift was the stimulating effect of the Wesleyan revival in the life of the nation. The other was the hangover of the evils in the life of the Church which had forced John Wesley to carry his message of love and redemption to the masses outside the Church.

As Overton states,

The Church had reached low water before the eighteenth century closed, and the dawn of the nineteenth century synchronized approximately with the turn of the tide. Abuses which had been allowed to go on for nearly a century without a remonstrance began then, at any rate, to be recognized as abuses, though, of course, it took some time to apply any effectual remedy to them.¹

Bishop Horsley in his charge to the clergy of the diocese of Rochester in 1800 challenged his hearers with the claim that no crisis since the moment of Our Lord's departure from the earth, had more demanded than the present, the vigilant attention of the clergy of all ranks. For the previous thirty years there had been but little correspondence between the lives of men and their profession, a general indifference about the doctrines of Christianity and a general neglect of its duties. The conditions which prevailed when Dr. Johnson told Boswell that he had never met a "religious clergyman" still lingered on. The history of this period provides numerous illustrations of hunting clergy, drinking clergy, pluralist and non-resident clergy, empty churches, the people spending Sunday in brutal sports; parishes without a single Bible in them, and without a school worthy of the name. An unidentified writer of a letter to William Wilberforce, dated 5 April 1802, states:

1 Overton, John H. - The English Church in Nineteenth Century p.3.

I saw Cowan at Helmsley only two days before he died. Our conversation turned upon the low state of religion there. Though the parish is populous, there are seldom twenty people at Church besides a few Sunday Scholars; and such is the declension amongst Dr. Conyer's old hearers, that there is not above one house in the town where family prayers is kept up.¹

And the parish of Alderley where Edward Stanley came as rector two years before Reginald Heber started his labours at Hodnet reveals tragically how it could suffer from the abuses of its clergy. Alderley, consisting,

of an agricultural population of about 1300 souls, had, from the long apathy of non-residence of the previous incumbent, been greatly neglected. The clerk used to go to the churchyard stile to see whether there were any more coming to church, for there were seldom enough to make a congregation... The rector used to boast that he had never set foot in a sick person's cottage.

Stanley comments further,

the average standard of the neighbouring clergy was not likely to present a high model of excellence to a new-comer. All who could afford it hunted; few, if any, rose above the ordinary routine of the stated services of the church.²

When Daniel Wilson went to Worton, a village near Banbury, as curate in 1804, he found

everything had fallen into sad neglect. The curate had been a keen sportsman, and kept hunters. The neighbouring clergy were like-minded, and the discussions at clerical parties turned chiefly on country sports. Very few attended church.³

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- 1 Wilberforce, Robert I. and Samuel - Correspondence of Wilberforce, Vol.I.p.243.
 - 2 Stanley, A.P., Ed. - Memoirs of Edward and Catherine Stanley, p.7.
 - 3 Bateman, Josiah - Life of Rgt.Rev.Daniel Wilson, D.D., Vol.I. p.120.

Bishop Burgess leaving his diocese after a long noteworthy struggle to improve conditions in the See of St.David reminded his hearers in his address to the clergy that when he was appointed in 1803

the churches and ecclesiastical buildings were generally in a ruinous condition. Many of the clergy were incompetently educated, and disgraced their profession by inebriety and other degrading vices.¹

Plurality, the holding of two or more benefices by one incumbent, was another besetting sin of the Church at this time. But this was one indulged in not only by many of the underpaid clergy who sought in this way to eke out a living, but by the scholars of the Establishment and the Bishops themselves. One of the ablest clergymen of the early part of the nineteenth century, when rector of a large and important parish, St.Mary-le-bow, Cheapside, London, saw no harm in applying also for the living of Farningham, near Sevenoaks, as a restful retreat convenient to the city. If he saw no harm in having two good livings, neither did the Archbishop of Canterbury, also an excellent churchman, see any harm in granting it to him. The bishops usually were not overly strict in this matter because many of them were also offenders. Plurality, besides tending to freeze the better livings in the control of fewer individuals, thus leaving less opportunity to mount the ecclesiastical ladder, also led to the evil of non-residence. Obviously a rector could

1 Harford, John S. - Life of Thomas Burgess, Bishop of Salisbury, p.361.

not be in both of his pulpits at the same time and, while the poorer clergyman had to work out a schedule of services to care for the needs of the two or three parishes by himself, the wealthier rector could hire a curate to take charge of services.

Not all the clergy were guilty of following the hounds, or of enjoying convivial company; neither were they all guilty of plurality and non-residence; many were scholarly, non-imaginative individuals going along comfortably in the rut of minimum effort broken by their predecessors. Very many were like the one described by Josiah Bateman:

The Rev.Dr.Strahan had been for many years the vicar; and his character entitles him to be spoken of with great respect. He was a fine specimen of the old school of divines - venerable in appearance - courteous in manners - a good scholar - an excellent reader - regular in the discharge of official duties - and a favourite with a large section of his parishioners. Under him Islington slept.¹

This was the type of clergyman who was going through the motions with the minimum of effort and thought; these men were coasting on the momentum of their youth. With little imagination being used in their activity, they steadily lost contact with the life of their parish, and the problems which the people were facing. They were not so much guilty of being indifferent to the change in the tempo of life and its demands, as they were unimaginatively unconscious of the changes taking place. The French

1 Bateman, Josiah - Life of Rgt.Rev.Daniel Wilson, D.D. p.232.

Revolution was affecting the work of the Church in two ways. Strangely enough, these two ways were progressing in diametrically opposite directions.

On the one hand, it acted as a sort of drag on her, by rendering men suspicious of any improvement, which was apt to be regarded as a dangerous innovation, savouring of that dreaded thing, Jacobism. On the other hand, it indirectly, but very really, stimulated her to increased activity. The revolutionary ideas, which in the later years of the eighteenth century undoubtedly leavened the minds of the lower classes, and in some cases led to violent disturbances, showed the Church how little real hold she had upon the masses.¹

The pull and haul of this situation was pertinent to the development of Reginald Heber. His father, Squire and Rector, was a stern, sturdy defender of the Church and State, a firm believer that the status quo was not to be changed. He could heartily echo "Amen" after his sister's plea,

God preserve us from the wicked devices of republicans and dissinters of all denominations.²

The home atmosphere of Reginald's youth was charged with this spirit. It became part of his life as we shall see; and yet, as an intelligent sensitive clergyman, he could not shrug off the challenge of change as it came to affect his people in the years of his ministry. In another way the French Revolution affected the history of the Church in those years. The

1 Overton, John - The English Church in the Nineteenth Century, p.2.

2 Cholmondeley, R.H. - The Heber Letters, p.72.

resultant struggle in which England was pitted against France monopolized the wealth of the nation and the concentrated interest of its people. It aroused men to a sense of the need for greater activity on the part of the Church, and, with the coming of peace, new expressions of the interest of the Church became translated into deeds.

Thus far, we have described one feature of the legacy of the previous century and the reaction to the international situation. The second part of that legacy was the stimulating effect of the Wesleyan revival. The revival of religion in England which was the spiritual high point of the eighteenth century was led by Wesley and Whitefield, with prominent roles taken by other clergymen - all of whom were clergymen in the Church of England. They preached, fervently and powerfully, definite dogmatic truth - the truth revealed in the Bible and enshrined in the English Prayer Book. They preached to men convicted of sin their need of repentance and God's promise of salvation.

And these truths did, by the power of the Holy Spirit, revolutionize thousands of lives, and did gradually revolutionize the Church of England. Those who came under the influence of these great pioneers of the revival had become three bands, one within the Church, and two outside. The Methodists who followed Wesley and the Calvinists who followed Whitefield. The third group was beginning to be known as Evangelical, comprising the men, who realising the privilege of their membership in the Church,

were willing to bear some disadvantages and restrictions from which those outside were free.¹

This group within the Church was a small one. The revival that had been intended by Wesley and his first followers as a spiritual reform within the body of the Church itself had, through the defensive action of the great majority of the churchmen, been forced outside and this contributed to the weakening of the position of the Established Church. According to Percy Dearmer,

at the beginning of the 18th Century there were 24 Churchmen to every Dissenter; but at the beginning of the 19th Century there were only 4 Churchmen to every Dissenter.²

With the coming of the second generation of adherents to the Evangelical movement, it lost some of its austere spirit; and, while it had succeeded in arousing among the educated classes a much more serious apprehension of social and religious problems, it had been itself unconsciously affected by the society which it had influenced. It tended to become, if not "worldly", at least reasonable, polite, and not unfashionable. These "serious" clergy and laymen represented a small minority within the Church. Nonetheless, it was this small group, the Evangelicals, or "Clapham Sect", as the Rev. Sydney Smith dubbed them in derision, which was to act as a dynamo for many of the projects which developed in the first quarter of the century,

1 One Hundred Years, Being the Short History of the Church Missionary Society, p.5.

2 Dearmer, Percy - Everymans History of the English Church p.144.

seeking solutions to problems of the age. In the Church, the deepest, most fervid religion of this period was that of the Evangelicals. Their true glory lay in their pastoral zeal and their philanthropy. To name the outstanding men of the Evangelical group or Party is to list names prominent in affairs of the Church and of the Nation in the first years of the century. At Clapham, John Venn and Thomas Gisborne, rectors, had as the nucleus of a small, but prominent group of influential laymen: William Wilberforce, M.P.; Henry Thornton, M.P. and banker (uncle to John Thornton, Reginald's lifelong friend); James Stephen, lawyer; and Lord Teignmouth, former Governor-General of India: another strong centre in London had as its Evangelical luminaries: John Newton, Basil Woodd, W.Goode, and Josiah Pratt. In the provinces were the following rectors: Thomas Scott; Robinson of Leicester; Richardson of York; and Charles Simeon of Cambridge. In addition, Zachary Macaulay and Charles Grant were laymen too prominent to be omitted from this listing. These men formed the nucleus of the Evangelical Party which,

maintained a long struggle against the slave trade, and supported missionary societies and charitable enterprises with princely generosity. William Wilberforce, member of parliament for the county of York, raised a hitherto unpopular and misjudged party in the public esteem when in 1797, he produced his 'Practical View of Christianity'. It found more readers than any other book by a clergyman.....He gave himself, as he advised others to give themselves, to practical Christianity.¹

1 The Cambridge History of English Literature Vol.XII, p.281.

Yet, this small group of "serious" clergy and laity were disliked to the point of hate by most Churchmen. Bishops regarded "Church-Methodism" as "a disease to be extirpated". Pearson, afterwards Dean of Salisbury, narrowly escaped rejection by his ordaining bishop because he spoke favourably of Wilberforce's "Practical View of Christianity". This group comprised those commonly called the Orthodox or High Churchmen, the strongest supporters of Church and State. They held an exalted view of the Church and its Establishment as opposed to the freer view held by the Dissenters and even the Evangelicals who placed less emphasis on this point though they considered themselves good Churchmen. William Jones, Vicar of Nayland, and William Stevens, his biographer, form the bridge from the former century to the new one. Joshua Watson, a strong layman, active in the affairs of the Church; John James Watson, his elder brother, rector of Hackney; Henry Handley Norris who devoted his whole life to the Church without remuneration; and Christopher Wordsworth, brother of the poet, chaplain and confidential friend of Dr. Manners-Sutton, Archbishop, and later Head of Trinity College, Cambridge, were leaders. Other prominent names in this select group were: Bishops Van Mildert, Marsh, Middleton, Mant, Jebb, Hobart and Inglis; Archdeacons Lyall, Cambridge, Pott and Baily; Dr. Routh of Magdalen College, Oxford; Dr. D'Oyly; Edward Churton; Hugh James Rose; the Bowdlers, Senior and his two sons; Thomas Rennell; judges, writers and almost all the Lake poets who were in strong sympathy with them.

The High Churchmen as a Party were respectable in numbers; and oustandingly so in point of intellectual attainments, moral earnestness, and spiritual activity. Yet, in spite of all this, this party did not exercise a wide, practical influence over the Church and Nation. Their views were not held generally.

Even many of those who valued most deeply the Church of England valued it chiefly as a great national institution, the preserver of order and decorum, and the home of culture. Inward spiritual religion was tacitly assumed by some, loudly proclaimed by others, to be the almost exclusive possession of quite another school of thought.¹

These then were the two active Parties in the Church during the lifetime of Reginald Heber. The Evangelical was the strongest spiritual force; the High Churchmen, the strongest intellectual force, in the Church of England during the first thirty years of the nineteenth century. They were both minority parties, yet it was around these two diverse poles that life in the Church during this time was energized. There was a great field of clergymen between these two Parties and few won any prominence apart from a Party. It is hoped, in projecting Reginald Heber's personality and character which exemplified both of these qualities against the religious background of his age, to show the development of Heber and his position relative to these two Parties, during his fifteen years as rector of Hodnet.

1 Overton, John - The English Church in the Nineteenth Century, p.47.

Reginald Heber in accepting the parish of Hodnet, came into one of the better country church livings. In some respects he resembles the clergyman described by J.A.Froude as existing about 1831;

They were generally of superior culture, manners, and character. The pastor in the 'Excursion' is a favourable but not an exceptional specimen of a large class among them. Others were country gentlemen of the best kind, continually in contact with the people, but associating on equal terms with the squires and the aristocracy.....The average English incumbent of fifty years ago was a man of private fortune, the younger brother of the landlord, perhaps, and holding the family living.¹

At the time when Heber began his ministry, a quarter of a century before the time described by Froude, such parish livings were not average, but in a minority. In the arguments pro and con on the Acts of 1802 ("Act for restraining clerical farming" and "Act for enforcing the residence of incumbents on their cures, and encouraging the building of churches") it was stated that

after all the augmentations of Queen Anne's Bounty, there were still a thousand livings in England and Wales which did not on an average exceed £85 while a very large proportion did not amount to £30.²

The value of the Hodnet living according to diocesan records (1805-1822) shows an average net income to the rector, after curate's fees and other payments, of approximately £1900 annually.

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- 1 Froude, J.A. - "Good Words" 1881, p.20. Quoted by Stoughton John - "History of Religion in England Vol.VII, pp.104-5.
- 2 Overton, John - "The English Church in the Nineteenth Century", p.298.

For his time, this living was a good one. However, for the standard of living to which he had been accustomed, it was not overly generous, and in the later years of his ministry in this parish, with the depreciation of currency value and high prices, we find Heber feeling the effects of financial pressure under the changed conditions.

Hodnet is today, as it was when Reginald began his parish duties there, one of the most pleasant parishes in England. To this stranger from across the sea who came to it for the first time on a December afternoon, with the glistening snow coating the pastoral landscape, it seemed like an old world print. The black and white ancient buildings clustered near the entrance to the churchyard are reminders of much earlier history. On rising ground out from the centre of the village still stands the sizeable rectory for which Heber drew the plans; and from its commanding position one can see the church, on a knoll, with its striking octagonal tower. Beyond lies Hodnet Hall, partially obscured by the trees.

but the charm of Hodnet lies in this, that it stands on the eastern fringe of the sylvan glories and pastoral landscapes of Hawkstone Park, the famous seat of the Hills. The parish, indeed, chiefly consists of the Hawkstone hills and woods, running down into dairy farms and picturesque hamlets, and all laid out with the best art of the landscape gardener. For rides and walks, or quiet meditation, for simple beauty and pastoral peace, no spot in all England, rich in such scenes, surpasses Hodnet and its surroundings.¹

1 Smith, George - Bishop Heber, pp.51-2.

On a clear day from the tower on the ridge of this ancient demesne one gazed over fifteen counties in the surrounding area.

Entering into the duties and responsibilities of his first parish, determined to protect and defend the Church which he cherished from any inroads by Dissenters, we are not surprised to learn that in his first letter to Thornton as a young rector, he commented,

the Methodists in Hodnet are, thank God, not very numerous, and I hope to diminish them still more; they are however, sufficiently numerous to serve as a spur to my emulation.¹

Later, he wrote that the Hills of Hawkstone, a prominent and honoured family, had declared their intention of attending Hodnet, which was their parish church. He perceived that such action on the part of his neighbours would "do a great deal of good" in the relations of the parish. The first year passed without outstanding incident as he wrote his sermons, conducted the services of the Church, formed his study habits, visited the villagers and the farmers who had known him in ways other than as their rector. A letter dating from the end of this first year, written by Dr. Edward Copleston² to Richard, contained an observation on the two younger Heber brothers.

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I. p.349.

2 Edward Copleston (1776-1849), Fellow of Oriel College, Professor of Poetry; Provost of Oriel, 1814; Bishop of Llandaff, 1828.

I was much pleased with Reginald's flock on Sunday. In the evening we had the Volunteers parading before the house and had the singular advantage of seeing Thomas bearing quarterly a drawn sword looking if not speaking very fierce.¹

The Volunteers had been called into preparation early in the summer, as Napoleon, supreme on the Continent after the Treaty of Tilsit, and having won over the Russians by diplomacy, put into effect a stringent blockade of Britain. This move depressed and at first gravely injured the trade and life of the country, but it failed to break her strength or spirit. A modern historian notes that England saw "an unprecedented demand for Walter Scott's 'Marmion' with its patriotic Introduction". This also was of interest to the Heber family, but for a far different reason - the popular author had dedicated the Sixth Canto in the poem to his good friend, Richard Heber.

If Mother Heber and Sister Mary noted that the young Rector was spending more time away from Hodnet Hall than in the previous months during the lovely summer days, we have no indication, but Reginald himself in an undated letter to his bosom friend, John Thornton, related what had been happening. This letter Amelia carefully omitted from the "Life" when she arranged it. A careful reading of it may suggest why she thought better to pass over this interestingly worded estimate of her charms.

1 Cholmondely, R.H. - The Heber Letters, p.221.

(Autumn 1808)

My dearest Friend,

I have to reproach myself exceedingly for having been so slack a correspondent for some time back, but when you learn how my thoughts have been occupied I am sure from the interest you have always taken in my happiness, you will forgive me. I have at last found the one thing which you told me was wanting to my happiness and usefulness, and am as much and I think as rationally in love as you ever have been. The object of my attachment I had not seen till this year since she was a girl when she had certainly struck me as the picture of health, high spirits and for her age uncommon sense, but I was exceedingly surprised and pleased with the improvements which (have) taken place between 15 and 20 her present age, and my chains were I think nearly rivetted by the accounts I received of her character and the education she had met with.

These accounts came from people on whose word I could depend and who had every possible means of judging, particularly from a clergyman whom I reverence most highly and who has been intimate in the Family, and from several women of very superior understanding who had known her long and of whom I made enquiries through my sisters assistance. Their first enquiries took place about the time I met you in London, when I had often my secret at my tongue's end, but, I hardly know why, repress it. Since I have had the means of fully confirming by my own knowledge all that has been said in her praise, having revived my former intimacy with her family, and had every opportunity of studying her disposition and what is of nearly as much importance the characters of her brothers and (family-crossed out) connexions. As to herself she has nothing like the beauty of your Eliza, but she has the same good sense, the same easy artless manners, the same excellent health and spirits, and I believe the same love of reading, and the same serious and unaffected piety. She is certainly not what is generally considered as highly accomplished, for she knows nothing of music, dances not over well, and has lived almost

entirely at home, but then she knows the modern languages very perfectly, and I have never met with a girl of her age who has so extensive an acquaintance with English books, or so apparent a wish to improve herself. I certainly never before knew what real attachment was, or at least I feel that my regard for her is very different to any that I have felt for others and I am happy enough to have attained a confession that the regard is mutual. You will think it high time that I should tell you her name, which is Shipley. She is youngest daughter to the Dean of St. Asaph, and connected with the Cottens, Corbets, Wynnes, and almost all the families in Shropshire or the neighbouring Welsh Counties. Her second brother I have known long, and since my Return to England very intimately, his name I have probably mentioned to you during our Tour, as a successful candidate (for) All Souls during my absence. Both our families (seem) pleased with the prospect of our union, and I have met with very liberal conduct from her's, respecting settlements, which, as I once complained to you, notwithstanding my good income I have very scanty means of making. I think in short, we may hope, if we have God's blessing, for happiness similar to yours. God grant you may long enjoy the blessings he has bestowed on you and may he grant you such further increase as his wisdom thinks best for your eternal welfare. I often think of you and feel now more anxiety than ever that our long friendship should continue, and that our children too may be taught to love each other.¹

Ever your affectionate.

Reginald Heber.

I hope Clarke has sent you the green books and drawings, Have you heard any tidings of the unfortunate drawing which was waiting for its frame?²

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- 1 An interesting prophetic wish that came true when John Thornton III and Harriet Heber married!
 - 2 Thornton Collection - MS.Letter (not numbered).

There is evidence that the Heber family and the Shipley family had been friendly for some years. After the Market Drayton muster of the Volunteers in September 1804, Reginald, in his report to his brother Richard, speaking of the return trip of the Hodnet Company, wrote, "I went with them as far as Styche and then returned to dine at Adderley with Colonel Chaytor and the Miss Shipleys, Miss Cotton, etc." Two years later a second reference is found in an Oxford letter to Miss Dod soon after his return to England.

I set out for Hodnet on Thursday, in company with poor Mrs. Shipley who is very anxious to have me as a companion on the road. She is looking very ill, poor thing, but has borne her return to England, and the bitter recollections accompanying it, with true Christian fortitude. I shall probably be obliged to return again to town in another week, but cannot refuse undertaking this journey with a poor invalid, whose excellent conduct under misfortune I have always admired, and whose relations are now doing all in their power to forward my brother's interest.....¹

However, it seems that Richard proved to be definitely hesitant about welcoming to the family the girl with whom Reginald, at twenty-five years of age, finally fell in love. Evidently, as another unpublished letter reveals, the brothers definitely differed about Amelia, or, as Reginald henceforth referred to her, Emily. The wording of this letter is interesting, with the Rector feeling he may be blamed "with weakness of resolution". It seems to the writer that this is

¹ Smith, George - Bishop Heber, pp.48-9.

one of the "crisis points" in Heber's life at which he is uncertain as to whether to follow his heart or authority. The reader may recall a similar predicament at Neasdon when under the prompting of his heart he championed an incipient revolt of the young students. Here, it seems that he had been persuaded to a certain course of action which he decided against. Reading the letters to Thornton and to his brother and noting the manner in which Reginald refers to his feeling for Emily, one recalls an earlier letter of advice he wrote on the type of young woman he should marry.

Hodnet Sat. Sept. 3rd.
1808.

My dear Brother:

However, you may with reason blame me with weakness of resolution I hope you will at least acquit me of duplicity, though I confess that I have acted contrary to the intentions I professed and entertained during our late conversation.

I have enjoyed opportunities of often repeated conversations with Emily Shipley and have been fully convinced of her good sense. Her cultivated mind and her attachment to me, and I could not bear to hazard the hope of possessing such a wife to the chance of future years.

I have now her consent and her father's approbation, but nothing more is fixed.

But though I have acted contrary to your affectionate and as I still think your prudent advice. I rely still on the promise you so kindly made me when we were talking on this very subject at Malpas, 'that if I really found her necessary to my happiness you would love her as a sister for my sake.'

But, I am sure she is deserving of your esteem for her own sake and I am sure that your kindness will continue to us both. Your esteem and advice which I have only this instance been

induced to differ from.

I think I have finished 'Europe' except for the few last lines with which I cannot satisfy myself. I will send them to you by Monday's post.

All here and all at Bodryddan¹ desires to be kindly remembered to you. The Dean deals very liberally with me as to his daughter's fortune, but as yet nothing 'decided'.

We are all well.²

With the brotherly approval of Richard, the fatherly approbation of Dean Shipley, and Emily's consent all given; the marriage was delayed because of another relative. Here the record is cloudy. Letters from Reginald to his brother are filled with heart burnings over the question as to whether the marriage should take place before or after Charles Shipley's trial. The exact nature of the trial remains undisclosed; it was enough, although he was acquitted by a jury finally, to close the door of the Church which had been his chosen profession after being elected as a Fellow of All Souls. Reginald and Charles had been friends in the period at Oxford when Heber had returned from his Northern European tour. The marriage was ultimately planned for March and Reginald confided to John, "As to my Emily the more I see and know of her, the more reason do I find for thankfulness for a reasonable hope of happiness." The wedding,

1 Bodryddan - Home of Dean Shipley's family.

2 Cholmondeley Collection - MS. Letter.

again delayed, was performed on Friday, 14th April, 1809. A little parsonage-house at Llandedr, near Ruthin, had been made available to them for a week's honeymoon, and Dame Nature conspired to have them snowbound, more or less. On the third day, a letter was written to Thornton which Emily later censored for inclusion in the "Life" so that it appears to be a weather report for a travel tour through North Wales. Her sense of humour must have been dim the day she copied the letter for publication for she allowed the letter to end with the sentence - "Where we are at present the winter predominates." Reginald in the letter was much more human and realistic, for, after relating the fact of the storm covering the hills with a deep fall of snow, he continued in the spirit of a bridegroom:

I need not however say that we are well able to amuse ourselves notwithstanding our confinement to the house. The more I see of Emily the more I am charmed with her good sense, piety and thorough innocence and simplicity of character. On many accounts, though the weather and the language of the neighbouring Churches obliged us to pass yesterday at home. Yet I never remember passing a Sunday so delightfully and now that I find in my wife a friend who feels on the most important of all subjects as I could wish to do myself, I have indeed ample cause for gratitude. You my dear fellow, I am sure, will be glad to hear this, because I know how much you have my best interests at heart, and much as I look on her person and am pleased with her conversation this is at present the uppermost idea in my mind. May God grant these blessings may not be thrown away on me. I can venture to write this sort of rhapsody to you as I am sure you will excuse it and indeed my feelings want some such vent.¹

1 Thornton Collection - MS.Letter No.40.

It was an ecstatic rector who returned to Hodnet to take up the spiritual care of the souls of that parish. At first he was without the services of a curate. The Rev. Robert Crockett had served in that capacity nearly twelve years. The position was to be filled in the autumn by Thomas, Reginald's younger brother. Prior to his marriage, in summing up the condition of the parish, Heber wrote, "I have reason to believe that both my conduct and my sermons are well liked", and honestly added,

but I do not think any great amendment takes place in my hearers. My congregations are very good, and the number of communicants increases... The Methodists are neither very numerous nor very active, they have no regular meetings, but assemble from great distances to meet a favourite preacher. Yet I have sometimes thought, and it has made me really uncomfortable, that since Rowland Hill's visit to the country, my Congregation was thinner. Perhaps it was only owing to the bad weather, as my numbers are now a little increasing again. The test here of a Churchman is the Sacrament, which the Methodists never attend.¹

The visits of the Rev. Rowland Hill created a problem for the Rector as he sought to protect the Church from the influence of dissent. The fact that Rowland Hill was a member of the noted Hill family, members of the Hodnet parish and friendly neighbours, complicated matters for a while and held Heber back from direct action. It came five years later. In the summer

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I, p.352.

of 1814, Mr. Rowland Hill obtained permission from the Rev. Mr. Pugh, curate of Weston Chapel, to preach in that pulpit. Weston, a small Chapel-of-ease, near Hawkstone, the residence of the Hills, was a part of the Hodnet parish. The Rector, not wishing to interfere with the right of the curate of Weston to open his pulpit to any regularly ordained clergyman whom he thought fit, took a decided stand when he learned that it was Mr. Hill's intention to preach on a subsequent day at nearby Woollerton. This was too much for the belief of the High Churchman side of Heber. He wrote a polite but firm letter to Rowland Hill after his sermon at Weston requesting him not to make use of that pulpit again, stating that:

as a member of the Church of England I will not permit that the pulpits where I have any influence shall be used by a person who encourages by his presence and preaching a dissenting place of worship.¹

He also wrote a letter in a similar vein to Mr. Hill's brother, the Rev. Brian Hill, couched in terms of humility, acknowledging that he was far from desiring to dictate to anyone, especially to one so much his senior, the manner in which he was to do good; that he entertained respect for Mr. Hill's character and intentions; and he was aware how much he himself might learn from his dauntless zeal and unwearied exertions; but, he believed that separation from the Church of England was evil

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol. I. p. 423.

and productive of evil. Mr. Rowland Hill could preach in Weston if he had no intention of preaching in the neighbouring dissenting chapel, but he could not do both with his permission. The difficult situation had been met face on, firmly and with a measure of tact. The letters were received in the spirit in which they had been written and there was no interruption to the friendship of the families. In the solution of this problem, Reginald Heber revealed a flash of the spirit which he was to exemplify as a Bishop of the Church - a firm and tactful direct approach. During his ministry in Hodnet the number of Dissenters in the parish did not increase.

In this reaction towards the evil of Dissent, Heber acted true to his upbringing as a loyal lover of the Church. Yet, there was a side of Heber's spiritual nature which reacted favourably to the strong influence of the Wesleyan Dissenters, and the Evangelicals. Early in his active ministry, he wrote requesting Thornton,

Can you tell me where I can purchase Cowper's Olney Hymns, with the music, and in a smaller size without the music to put in the seats? Some of them I admire very much, and any novelty is likely to become a favourite, and draw more people to join in the singing.¹

Here he leans towards the enthusiastic Evangelicals and Dissenters. This search for good hymns for his parish was to

1 Ibid. p.352.

lead to a form of immortality as author of some of the great hymns of the Christian Church. But this expression of his talent is to be treated more fully as a phase of his avocation in a succeeding chapter.

Along with the problem of the presence of Dissenters on the fringe of his Parish, Heber was much concerned with the problems of drunkenness and disregard of the Lord's Day. No teetotaller himself, nor strict observer of the Christian Sabbath as followed by the Evangelical Party,¹ he was, however, concerned with the social problem of mischief arising from neglect of the day. As a means of preventing this, he resorted to action at the source of the difficulty.

by the assistance, I may say advice, of one of the Churchwardens, a very worthy and sensible, though plain farmer, the shopkeepers have been restrained from selling on Sundays; and I have persuaded the inn-keepers to sign an agreement, binding themselves under a five guinea forfeiture not to allow drinking on that day.²

In this problem Heber revealed a willingness to seek and take advice; and to use persuasion; commendable qualities for a future bishop, but not too common in exalted ecclesiastical personages.

A phase of the previous problem was the fact that after

1 Heber's Sunday observance - "Domestic arrangements made so that every member of the household could attend at least one Divine Service. After its public duties were ended, he employed the remainder of the evening in attending to the spiritual and temporal necessities of his parishioners, in composing sermons, in study, or in instructive conversation with his family." Ibid. Vol.I, pp.420-1.

2 Ibid. p.352.

the morning service of the Established Church was over, it had nothing else to offer its people that day.

A change had come over the habits of the nation in the matter of rising and going to bed. Both were later than they had been in the eighteenth century, and the consequence was that something was required to fill up the long Sunday evenings.¹

The question of Sunday evening services was much agitated in the early part of the century. The Methodists did have sermons in the evening services, and this gave some of the Church clergy a reason for not imitating them; others argued that it would provide an opportunity for young people to be abroad in the dark to the detriment of morality; a third group were against it because the idea was new. The Evangelical clergy led the way in the adoption of Sunday evening services. Reginald Heber had held an afternoon service with sermon during the summer months, and this he extended throughout the year, beginning in the spring of 1809. The power of the sermon he had always recognised and had sought to lift the spirit of his hearers through it. A study of his work as a preacher, in which his worth is not so well recognised, will be treated in a separate chapter. At the end of the summer, he was able to write,

My parish goes on, I think and hope, rather on the mending hand, particularly in respect to the observance of Sunday; and what is also perceptible, in an increasing desire to have comfort and advice from me when they are sick,

1 Overton, John - The English Church in the Nineteenth Century. p.141.

which was chiefly only when they were at extremity. I have much less time for reading than I could wish, but my wife always encourages me to diligence.¹

He had reached a new level in the lives of his people as he became their friend and ministered to their needs. As he went about he found that he was slow at remembering names and faces, which he regretted. It is strange that his skill at remembering the material on the printed page did not serve him as well in his parish work. In these months, Heber was too closely concerned with his personal problems to make any note of the stirring Peninsula War which an English army under Sir John Moore and later General Wellington had been waging in Spain after an abortive Spanish uprising had been put down by Napoleon.

In the months following their marriage, the Hebers lived with his mother and sister in Hodnet Hall, as they found much more work would be necessary to repair the old parsonage than had at first been planned. Late in June, Reginald and his wife made a journey to his University. Excerpts from a letter to his mother described some of the hazards of coach travel and Heber's Samaritan-like manner:

We had a good journey, but so intolerably dusty, that I can even yet hardly breath. My fellow travellers were dust and ashes indeed; most admirable emblems of mortality, excepting in their conversation, which was very sensible, and rather above the common run of a mail-coach... There have been some insignificant riots at

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I. p.360.

Birmingham and Wolverhampton, occasioned by the dearness of provisions....As we were about two miles from Oxford, we saw a man lying senseless on the road; I lifted him up, and on giving him some cold water he recovered, having fainted from fatigue and hunger.....(supplied him with food and transportation). Another accident was far more distressing. In passing through Newport, the carriage-wheel went over a poor girl, and broke her leg. I had the satisfaction of hearing from the surgeon that the fracture was not dangerous, and he assured me he would take all possible care of her, to induce him to which I left my address.¹

The visit to Oxford was "to show Emily the spectacle of a Chancellor's installation". Lord William Wyndham Grenville, who climaxed a long career of public service, after serving as Prime Minister of the short-lived "Ministry of all the Talents", by winning a closely contested election² for the Chancellorship of the University, succeeding the Duke of Portland, was a cousin of William Pitt and also a close relative of the Wynn family of Denbighshire, with whom the Heber family were well acquainted. It seems likely that Richard and Reginald supported his candidacy. Archdeacon Ralph Churton, a friend of Richard, writes of the concern that a report from Oxford had given him,

it was said you attended and assisted Lord Grenville's committee in town.³

Churton berated Grenville primarily for his position in favour

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol. I. pp. 364-5.

2 Election Results 14th Dec. 1809. Grenville 406 votes, Lord Eldon 393, Duke of Beaufort 288.

3 Cholmondeley, R.H. - The Heber Letters p. 228.

of greater emancipation for the Roman Catholics in government. It seems probable, however, that the Hebers' support was on the basis of family friendship with the Wynns. In connection with the installation, a poem in praise of the new Chancellor by Reginald was read. Some years later his volume of the Bampton Lectures was also dedicated to Lord Grenville.

The even tenor of Reginald's life suffered new strains in the autumn, similar to difficulties his friend Thornton had been undergoing in his affairs. After commiserating with John he wrote, "Consider, too, that even I have my vexations." Emily, editing the "Life", left her friends with that bare statement, but in the original letter is found this poignant paragraph:

The sudden and insolvent death of an agent may, as has been the case since we met deprive me of no trifling part of my year's income. My wife's health and my own are neither of them altogether satisfactory. My hopes of children seem deferred till my heart would be sick if it were a very puny one, and my anxiety about my unhappy brother-in-law has been great and unremitted.¹

Nor are my labours as a clergyman such as to make me find it altogether play. Do not think, however, that I fancy myself anything but what I am, in truth, a prosperous man, who has unremitted causes of gratitude, and whose principal apprehension ought to be that he has a greater share of earthly happiness than he knows how to manage. I only mention these little drawbacks to remind you of the novel remark of our poor friend Bristow, "Ah, Mr. Thornton, perfect happiness is not the lot of man!" That you may have as much as is good for your eternal interests, and that my gratitude may increase daily for the great share of quiet and

1 Thornton Collection - MS. Letter No.43.

prosperity with which I am blessed, is my earnest prayer, and I think I may add, my hope.¹

This feeling of strain and depression had disappeared with the coming of Christmas. A delightful letter from Richard to his sister relative to a holiday fete which she and Reginald's wife desired to give in the Hall, provides us with a fleeting glimpse of a phase of social life they enjoyed. It also gives us a view of the thirty-six year old bachelor, book-collecting Lord of the Manor.

25th December 1810.

With respect to your drum, if you and Emily have a violent desire for it, I have no objection, only remember, it is your concern, not mine, for I cannot possibly get down in time and if I could, should never think of giving a fete in such an old ragamuffin mansion as mine is at present.

The part of your scheme which I like the least is making the library a partaker of your festivities. Consider what a vile bad approach there is to it, and what moving of tables and sorting of papers must be previously encountered. Remember also what a rascally little fireplace it contains, unless indeed you propose making the farther room into your supper apartment, in which case the servants will share your conversation. If however you fixed your heart on one or other of these poor unfortunate chambers, I do hereby most strictly insist that you neither clear nor sort any of the books on the shelves or change their position in the slightest degree or put candles or lamps or bottles or glasses or oysters or butter boats on or near any of the shelves or prop up the feet of the tables with books however mean to counteract the unevenness of the floor. I should also wish my new writing tables to be put out of the reach of spruce-beer and

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I.p.367.

bottled ale and not to exhibit the impression of the glutinous bottom of goblets and decanters. The carpet will want beating I suppose and the room sweeping, but allow me to crave mercy for the books themselves. As to dancing, you may dance as long as you like in the dining parlour, which is in fact the only room fit for it. With respect to inviting neighbours, you must please yourself, tho' I think you will find it difficult to draw the line without offence. Indeed 24 will be as many as you can accommodate comfortably with chairs or anything else.

If you are determined to be kissed under a bunch of mistletoe, let it be suspended anywhere but in the library and do not ornament the shelves by sticking holly and laurel all over them.

A Merry Xmas and much good foolery to you
all.¹

And doubtless "much good foolery" was enjoyed by Mary, Emily and Reginald in entertaining their friends in celebration of the new year. The first half of 1811 in the Heber family was a quiet period occupied with the usual round of parish activities and writing. Robert Southey's poem, "Curse of Kehama", embodying an original story based upon Hindu religious beliefs appeared and was hailed by Heber as the "finest thing which Southey has yet produced". His expressed interest seems confined to its literary aspect rather than any religious feeling. This is of interest since Mrs Heber, following the death of her husband, credits Mr. Southey with having considerable influence, through his various writings, in directing Reginald's interest to the East and its problems.

1 Cholmondeley, R.H. - The Heber Letters p.237.

Concerning his parish work he referred to "a fruitless attempt to reform the psalmody" and "laying schemes for a Lancasterian School in Hodnet." There had been Charity Schools, founded by Churchmen in the previous century for the purpose of educating the children of the poor, but the first really systematic attempts date from the early years of the nineteenth century. The National Society for education was on the eve of birth in the autumn, but Heber anticipated the official work of the Church by his efforts to establish a Lancasterian school in his village. Without going into the details of the "Bell and Lancaster controversy", it is worthy of noting that Heber established first a Lancasterian school, the essence of which system was that distinctive religious teaching was excluded from its curricula. Later, he adopted the programme of the National Society which was based upon the Bell system with its stress upon the national religion as the foundation of national education. Heber, seeking to meet a problem of the people he recognised as important, had first used a system which he later rejected for one which better expressed his Churchmanship and basic faith.

Reginald and his sister were at Cambridge as guests of the Thorntons to witness the installation of the Duke of Gloucester as Chancellor of that University. Mary reported to her eldest brother, "The Duke is in extacy with the honours that are conferred on him and bows from morning to night."¹

¹ Ibid. p.241.

Reginald and Emily had a secret which he shared later with Thornton.

An event, too, is now likely which will make both my wife and myself even more domestic than we were and which as I know it will give you pleasure.....She has reason again to think herself with child, and as the third month is now far advanced and the period consequently past when her former miscarriage took place there is I think good hope if it please God that her time may go on prosperously as she is in very good health at present.¹

But their happiness was not to be made complete. We learn from a letter dated March 17, 1812, that Emily met with a disappointment at Christmas. Both suffered from ill health. Reginald commented with what must have been a wry smile, "My own illness was as usual only skin deep." This reference to his inveterate enemy was to a skin disorder which was to cause him ever greater irritation and torment during the next two years. In his official biography, his wife reports that this skin disease was "originally brought on by exposure to the night air in an open carriage during his journey through the Crimea, and which had never been entirely eradicated." Actually, he had suffered for a similar ailment as a youth.

At the same time that every effort was being made to build up Emily and Reginald's health, the old rectory was being torn down. It required so much reconstruction to make it convenient that finally the decision was made to build a new rectory on a

1 Thornton Collection - MS. Letter No.44.

different part of the glebe. Reginald and his wife resided at Moreton, a perpetual curacy with a chapel of ease, in the Hodnet parish. His brother Tom, as Curate of Moreton, had invited them to share the parsonage with him until their new rectory should be completed.

The effects of the strangulation of trade on the high sea by France and Britain was felt not only by the transoceanic neutrals but by people within the island itself. The price of bread rose beyond the means of many of the wage-earners; even the people living on the land felt the pinch of the blockade coupled with scarcity of food due to poor crops. A friend of Richard wrote to him from Manchester, "The lower classes of people are in a most alarming state. God knows where the mischief will end. The matter has quite a revolutionary appearance." Three weeks prior to that message Reginald called a meeting of his vestry to set up a "soup-kitchen" relief project. Mary, in her letter to Richard requesting "financial approval", enables us to see the outline of the plan.

19 April 1812.

There was a Vestry called this evening to consult on the cheapest means of relieving the poor during the present scarcity, when it was agreed by the farmers that a weekly distribution of soup would be the most effectual. For this purpose they have begun subscriptions, Mr. Clarke giving three guineas, Reginald the same and some of the farmers ten shillings each. The subscribers will be allowed a certain proportion of tickets according to the sum they give, which they will dispose among such poor as they chuse. We guess that a subscriber of ten shillings may expect ten quarts of soup for ten weeks and so in proportion. Reginald wished me to write to you, hoping you will have

no objection to the scheme and contribute towards it. Mrs. Williams has engaged to make the soup therefore there is every reason to hope it will be well done.¹

Richard approved by return mail with five guineas. This was a parish Church project, but Reginald's feelings for the sufferings of the poor were well known among his parishioners. A Curate of his, much later in life, in recounting his kindness and sympathy to those he discovered needing help, said,

many a good deed done by him in secret, only came to light when he had been removed far away, and but for that removal would have been forever hid; many an instance of benevolent interference where it was least suspected, and of delicate attention towards those whose humble rank in life is too often thought to exempt their superiors from all need of mingling courtesy with kindness.²

He considered himself as the steward of God's bounty. He had so much pleasure in conferring kindness that he often declared it was an exceeding indulgence of God to promise a reward for what carried with it its own recompense.

As the tempo of the Continental war increased, with General Wellington being hailed as "our Nelson on land", a reviving belief was expressed in Britain that France could be finally overthrown. In that spring, however, Napoleon led his Grand Army east; his aim was to drive back Russia into the Asian steppes and open a way to world empire. As the news of the French advance through Poland into Russia reached England,

1 Cholmondeley, R.H. - The Heber Letters p.245.

2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I.p.357.

Heber, as a former student of military tactics and returned traveller from the scenes of Napoleon's advance, wrote in a reminiscent and contemporary tone to his companion of the Tour,

Which of us could have believed, when we witnessed the wolf-hunt on those wide frozen waters, that the cuirassiers of France would ever let their horses drink there? For the fate of Moscow, I confess I feel very keenly;¹

And his reference to Russia's "Scythian system of substituting extent of country for defensible features" has a most modern recognition as the "defence in depth" of World War Two.

If the year of 1812 was an unhappy one for Reginald, "a year of wandering and non-residence, because of his health", the following one continued in the same vein. So much so was that true that in May we find him writing an especially depressed letter to his old confidante. The conditions which depressed him are similar in mood to those experienced by all other clergymen at some time or other; and he, too, came to the low point of wondering if he was in the right position for his talents. The improvement of the parish did not correspond to the pleasant dreams he had enjoyed in beginning his ministry. His congregations were good but no better than the earlier ones. The schools had come to a standstill. He even wondered if his literary habits were well suited for a country clergyman; or that perhaps, like the early converts to Christianity, he should burn his books which he felt tempted him from the duties of

1 Ibid. p.387.

his parish. Looking back in a spirit of inventory he felt that little had been accomplished. And financially, too, he was most unhappy. Building costs were high, so were other expenses. How could it be, he asked himself,

that with no expensive habit that I know of in either of us, and with an income beyond even our wishes, we have never succeeded in having that best sort of abundance which arises from living within one's income?

He granted that the expense of a servants' hall was considerably more than that of the parlour, and that financial difficulties stemmed partly from his own habits of heedlessness. The half-way role of parson and squire depressed him too. In this mood he exclaimed,

It is very foolish, perhaps; but I own I sometimes think that I am not thrown into that situation of life for which I am best qualified.¹

At a time like that a change of scenery is a good prescription to follow. At least it proved to be so for Reginald, for after six weeks at Tunbridge Wells, a far prettier and more agreeable watering-place than he had expected, he returned to his parish to find the usual scene of duties and interests considerably endeared to him by the temporary cessation. In fact, the listless, discontented feeling had fled; it even seemed to him that his congregation listened more avidly to his sermon than they had in the spring. Visits to the Thornton

1 Ibid. pp.392-3.

family had contributed their measure to the toning up of his spirits; and perhaps, too, the offer of a Prebendary at Durham had given a lift to his depressed mood. The offer was not seriously considered because acceptance would have meant exchanging Hodnet for it and would not have been consistent with his regard for his brother's interests, even though it would have meant an increase in his income. It pleased him to have the opportunity to say "No." His ambition was being stirred, this was an indication that there was a place on a higher level of activity for him.

That the low point had been left behind in a surge of his spirit upward was seen in his comment to R.J.Wilmot,

A merely theoretical life must inevitably grow tiresome in the long run; and though there may be fatigue, and will be disappointment wherever there is ambition, yet its enjoyments are, I apprehend, keener than its regrets. Nor is this all; an active and busier man is not only happier, but better than an idle one.¹

In his own parish, he was busy preparing a sermon he was to preach before the Bible Society. The congregation, he later noted, was numerous and attentive, although not very liberal. "The Archdeacon, all the Evangelical and several of the other clergy, with a great body of squirearchy" with a sprinkling of Dissenters formed the Society. He had first become a supporter

1 Ibid. p.401.

of the work of the Bible Society in the autumn of 1804 at Oxford, when the Society was only a few months old. The British and Foreign Bible Society had sprung into being from the Religious Tract Society which though founded by Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists had been largely patronized by Evangelical Churchmen. The patronage and co-operation of the Established Church was gained from the start with Lord Teignmouth as President, and the Bishops of London, Durham, Exeter and St.Davids listed as vice-presidents. Henry Thornton became treasurer and his nephew, John, who interested Reginald in it, later in life was to succeed his uncle in that responsible office. With this background one can better appreciate Heber's sentence which was left out of a published letter.

In Denbighshire I think I have been of some service to the Cause as I flatter myself my influence with my father-in-law (Dean Shipley of St.Asaph) has in fact contributed to make him from an enemy a very zealous supporter and a very powerful one as besides his situation in the Church he is one of the best public speakers in England.¹

Enthusiastic though he was about the work of this Society, which of course brought him into favourable light with the leading members of the Evangelical party, there were many who deprecated its programme and any association with it. Although there was patronage of the Established Church for the Society

1 Thornton Collection - MS.Letter No.52.

it did not receive the unified backing of all Churchmen. The Evangelicals were decidedly in favour of the Bible Society, some of the High Churchmen were not so certain; and there were others decidedly opposed to it. Archdeacon Ralph Churton expressed the view of this last group.

I was much concerned to hear that the Rector of Hodnet had been drawn into being an advocate of the Bible Society, which I believe to be big with mischief only less than popery. In this County almost all the Clergy keep aloof from that motley association. But the few pseudo-evangelicals that are to be found in some distant parts are to a man I believe friends of the Bible Society and to the claims of the Roman Catholics.¹

Passing judgment on Reginald Heber's interests, the Archdeacon pronounced judgment on himself.

The problem of Catholic Emancipation, as it was termed, concerned the claim of the Roman Catholics to the full rights and liberties of citizens. This subject of agitation was inherited from the eighteenth century and was not finally settled by Parliament until 1829. The matter had been presented by various statesmen, "but the Catholic claims were extremely unpopular"² not only with the King, George III, but with the majority of the people.

1 Cholmondeley, R.H. - The Heber Letters, p.265.

2 Trevelyan, G.M. - British History in the Nineteenth Century and After, p.117.

So far as English Churchmen were concerned, opinion was curiously divided. Men who on most questions were agreed, now found themselves in opposite camps.¹

The Evangelicals usually presented a united front, but on this matter one of their most prominent lay leaders, William Wilberforce, favoured Catholic Emancipation in face of the strong opposition of his party. That it was a difficult decision for him to make we appreciate as we read a quotation from his "Life":

Meetings against Roman Catholics in all parts of England. I am very doubtful which way is right. Lord, direct me! All the religious people are on the other, but they are sadly prejudiced. It grieves me to separate from the dean and all my religious friends; but conscience must be obeyed.²

Wilberforce was wrong in thinking that all the religious men were opposed to Catholic Emancipation. Prominent men of both the High Churchmen and the Evangelical Parties took positions on his side of the question.

Reginald Heber's position is not definitely stated in any of his available writings. He was interested in it, although only two mentions are made of it in his "Life". The first mention was in 1819,

Above all, however, I feel anxious to know what is your opinion on the ultimate fate of the Catholic question.³

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- 1 Overton, John - The English Church in the Nineteenth Century, p.305.
 - 2 Wilberforce, Robert I. and Samuel - Life of William Wilberforce, p.336.
 - 3 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I. p.515.

The second occurred two years later.

The Roman Catholic question has excited this time far less interest than I expected, either during or since the decision. A party of the gentry of Cheshire, who were most of them decidedly ultra tory, with whom I was a week ago, were generally disposed to favour the measure. In Shropshire a similar division of opinions, or, perhaps, to speak more properly, suspension of opinions, has existed, and all attempts to get up a Protestant petition were received so coolly as to be strangled in the birth. Here, in Chester, the Cathedral bells were rung when the decision was known; but the clergy, in general, profess themselves sorry that this was done.¹

In neither of these statements, which were made in letters to his friend, R.J.Wilmot, M.P., does he reveal his sympathy. By inference we may assume he was favourable to it, since he made no strong outburst on the second occasion. Mrs Heber definitely states that

Mr.Reginald Heber's opinion on the question of Catholic Emancipation was opposed to that of the University;.....The brothers also differed on this point.²

Oxford University as a body strongly opposed Catholic Emancipation even though its Chancellor, Lord Grenville, did not.

Mr.Robert Peel, the chosen representative of the Oxford Tories and High Churchmen, who had long been an uncompromising opponent of the measure, in 1829 reversed himself and voted for it as a

1 Ibid. Vol.II, p.37.

2 Ibid. Vol.II, pp.47-8.

Government Bill, and lost his seat at Oxford in consequence. Evidently Reginald held definite views on the question, but these did not prevent him from working wholeheartedly for his brother's election as member of parliament for the University when the opportunity presented itself in 1821. In his parish this apparent sympathy for the political rights of the Roman Catholic did not curb his zeal for winning to the Church any who were outside it. A young woman member of the Church and a daughter of one of his most respectable parishioners married a member of the Roman Catholic Church. After a child of this marriage had been baptised by a clergyman of that church, Heber, in a long, well-expressed letter to the husband, as a neighbour living within the parish, carefully explained the points of faith held in common and where difference occurred. By his argument, he sought to confirm the wife in the faith of her parents and to "induce" the husband to abandon his doctrinal position and embrace that of the Established Church. The letter was well received but produced no conversion.

The winter of 1814 in England was a severe one. The Rev. Thomas Scott recorded in his diary, "Nothing like this winter has occurred for almost fifty years".¹ But in France, the paralyzing struggle which had engaged the forces of Napoleon and of Britain for so many years was drawing to a rapid end.

1 Scott, John - Life of the Rev. Thomas Scott, p.432.

General Wellington's army after the crossing of the Pyrenees drove Soult's battered soldiers before it through France until the English forces met at Meaux the armies of Russia and Prussia coming from the north. The end was at hand. Napoleon made a last frenzied effort to save Paris, but though his spirit burned fiercely, the troops were but tattered remnants of his once proud army. Paris surrendered. London's populace poured through the streets dancing and singing joyously when the news of the fall of Paris and the imminent end of all hostilities reached the capital on 5th April. A fortnight later, Reginald Heber had some pertinent comments to make on the French people and the State of the Nation to Wilmot, who anticipated a trip to Paris.

Yet with all their faults and follies, how well have this people fought! Will it not follow that animal spirits and national pride are the principles of valour? and that a sense or desire of liberty has nothing to do with it? On the whole, the revolution which has taken place is so like the last scene of a comedy that when I wake in the morning I can hardly believe it real. Not that even yet we are quite on dry land, the Jacobins in England will still continue howling for a reform in parliament, and though the Irish catholics will probably sinkⁱⁿ their demands, I fear the orthodox will harden their hearts in proportion. There are, in fact, too many mischievous spirits abroad to subside into perfect tranquillity.¹

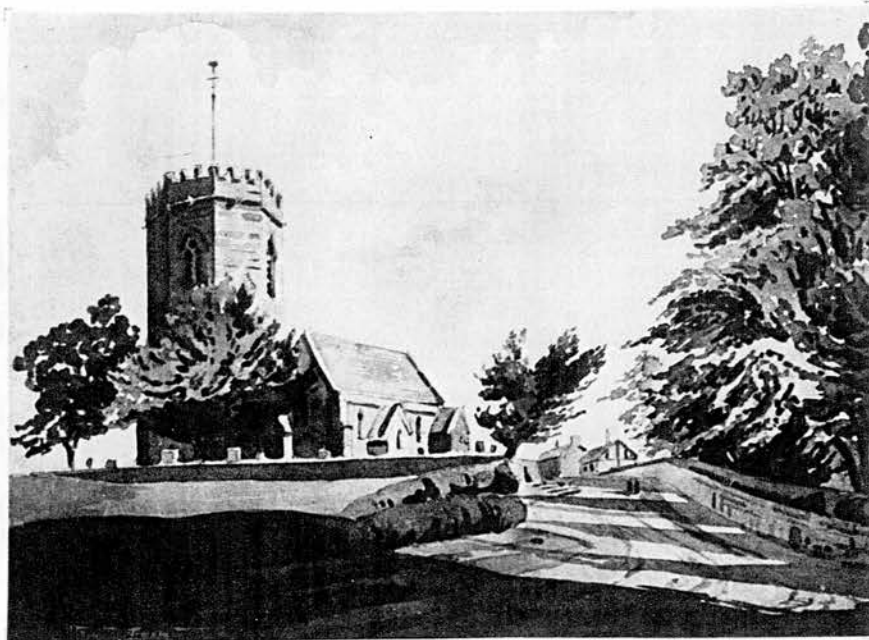
As the peoples of Europe sought to re-establish their old routine of life, the Hebers were faced with a similar situation

1 Ibid. Vol.I. p.417.

on a much smaller and less difficult scale. The new rectory at Hodnet, after many delays, was at last completed and ready for occupancy in the spring. It was an imposing home situated on a rolling part of the glebe overlooking the Church and the village. Reginald built for the future¹ though misfortune had prevented the starting of the family for which he longed. The new home, situated in a lovely garden, contained eighteen rooms. To care for it in those early days was not the problem that it is today. The present Rector's wife told me with just a slight trace of envy in her tone - "Of course, he had fourteen servants and three gardeners!" But adjustments came slowly and he found he had a vexing problem in a waterless well, "which only yielded a fluid that would baffle the thirst of an Arab", as he expressed it. To replace it meant to run further into debt which he "hated and abhorred"; and at the same time he was faced with the prospect of a law-suit for part of his previous year's tithes.

The year 1814 witnessed an event that was to have an effect in a short span of years upon the life of Reginald Heber. It was an event of such importance that it seems strange to find no mention of it in any of his contemporary letters. The first Bishop to the newly recognized See of Calcutta, which

1 Even he couldn't foresee a successor who would have thirteen children and would add a whole wing to the Heber rectory to increase its room size to thirty!



embraced all British India, was appointed. Dr. Thomas Fanshaw Middleton, Archdeacon of Huntingdon, was presented with this challenging task upon the suggestion of the Bishop of Lincoln to the Earl of Buckinghamshire, then President of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs in India, who recommended him to the Prince Regent.¹ The provision for the Episcopal Establishment in India had been passed by Parliament in its renewal of the East India Company's Charter. For reasons which seemed wise to them in view of possible difficulties with the natives in India, very little publicity was attendant upon this event, even the consecration sermon was suppressed from publication. Heber must have been aware of the event and its significance for the Church, but mention of it did not find its way into his letters.

The newly-won calm of Europe was shattered, and even the polished diplomats of the Congress of Vienna were upset, when the fearful word circulated rapidly that Napoleon was free and marching on Paris. Troops sent by King Louis of France deserted him to embrace the newly raised standard of the Eagle. Dying embers of revolution were fanned into crackling flame and the vanished armed strength of Napoleon reappeared in its flickering light.

These months in the spring of 1815 were important ones in the ecclesiastical career of Heber, the Rector of Hodnet, for

1 LeBas, C.W. - The Life of Thomas Fanshaw Middleton, D.D.
p.50.

in the weeks preceding Easter and immediately following, he delivered the Bampton Lectures at St.Mary's, Oxford University. An invitation to present this annual series of Divinity Lecture Sermons, established by the Rev.John Bampton, Canon of Salisbury, was a high honour. Noted scholars and preachers had appeared in the role of Bampton Lecturer. Dr.Van Mildert, a leading figure of the High Churchmen and Regius Professor of Divinity, had presented the series of lectures in the preceding year. It is stated in the "Life" by Mrs.Heber that Reginald received notice of his appointment during the year of 1814. This undoubtedly refers to the official selection which is always made in the spring of the year in which the lectures are scheduled to be given. But Heber himself, as early as 12th November, 1812, gives us a reference to conjure with -

I am strongly recommended by Heber (Richard) to proceed in my 'Dictionnaire Historique Critique' without, however, giving up my Bampton lecture scheme, or Ganore.¹

The question immediately raised is: did Reginald have an advance notice eighteen months before the selection was supposedly made that he was to be so honoured by his University? This seems unlikely, especially so since he used the word "scheme" in connection with it. With his classical background and extensive reading habits Heber tended to be a "purist" in his word usage; this use of the word "scheme" suggests that he

1 Heber, Amelia, - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I.p.389.

was seeking this honour. He chose as his subject, "The Personality and Office of the Christian Comforter", which his wife commented upon as one

well calculated to bring forward his stores of theological learning, and to exhibit the calm and profound devotion of his own spirit.

The nature and importance of his experience will be noted in a subsequent chapter, "Heber as a Preacher".

With the supposed ending of the war in Europe before Napoleon returned to threaten the newly achieved peace, the price of corn fell, suddenly creating a panic in England.

Farmers threw up their farms in multitudes, and became bankrupts and village paupers. The landlords themselves, who had unwisely launched out into expenses on the expectation of perpetual high prices, had often mortgaged their estates and were in great difficulties.¹

The mistake the landlords made was to pass in Parliament the Corn Law of 1815, prohibiting the import of corn until the price of wheat soared beyond the purchasing power of the people. Heber, as a rector in the agricultural area of Shropshire, showed his concern in the vexing aspects of the problem which concerned him and many of his parish, in a letter to his friend Wilmot, who had recently been in Parliament.

I was a good deal comforted by learning from an old farmer yesterday, that the year after the American War things went still worse with men of his situation than now, and that signs of the times were still less promising; yet then no

1 Trevelyan, G.M. - British History in the Nineteenth Century, p.152.

corn-bill, I believe, was thought of. I wish you could give me some little sense on this difficult question. The clergy are certainly interested to keep the price up; but I cannot, as yet, admit a principle so apparently at variance with political economy, as any of the measures which the newspapers have hitherto offered; and cannot help thinking that though the return from our recent unnatural state may be painful, it is better to discontinue, as soon as possible, habits which we know to be eventually destructive. At all events, I rather want to make up my own mind, in order that I may have something to say to my neighbours, who are all wild after petitioning and whom I have as yet exhorted to patience.¹

With the brilliant victory of Wellington and his hastily organised Allied armies over Napoleon and his regenerated forces on the bloody cornfields of Waterloo, peace between nations in Europe was won. With the consignment of the plucked Eagle to exile on St.Helena, exhausted peoples set about restoring order within their national economies. Only one nation had emerged from the long struggle while assuring her people social order and freedom of choice. "Britain might not be the Utopia of the philosophers, but she was nearer it than anything mankind had yet achieved".² Yet for Britain and her people in this hour of their high glory, the way ahead was not going to be clearly marked. The Rector and the men and women of his parish found the seven years that followed the Napoleonic Wars among the most confused the ancient kingdom

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I.p.427.

2 Bryant, Arthur - The Age of Elegance, p.255.

had known. A major revolution had been going on within the country while the main interest of the leaders and the people was focused on the military scene. Step by step with the rural revolution there had been advancing an urban revolution, similar in principle and in spirit, and at the beginning similar in its social consequences. A new civilization, a product of a powerful new machine age, was being forged, which would ultimately bestow many gifts upon mankind, but which at the same time was to hurt and crush the spirit of myriads.

Reginald Heber, the Rector of Hodnet, was on the fringe of these great centres of pressure, but he and his people were to feel the numbing effects of change. With a sturdy Tory background, an aristocrat of the land, he was sometimes accused of being ultra-tory in sentiment, but as one reads his correspondence, one senses the struggle going on in his mind as he sought to influence his parishioners in those years of changing standards. Sometimes he held a more liberal position; sometimes it was that of his old Tory father. His love of people tended to keep him close to the centre of the position, even when he declared,

I am convinced that a tory feeling is that which it is for the happiness of the country to cherish; and that when this is unfashionable, and its open avowal unpopular, a feverish and uncomfortable state is implied.¹

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I. p.433.

Reports of the extremely poor harvest in the Cambridgeshire area caused him to see in it a stimulus of the country's manufactories for the developing of export trade. At that time, he, along with many others failed to understand the amount of misery which could come to the English working and farming classes. Not only was he concerned about the Corn Law, but he wrote to Wilmot about a possible reduction of the Salt tax.

I had rather the Salt tax had been struck off, or reduced to half its present rate; and verily think that by the stimulus which it would give to the fisheries, as well as to the dairy and grazing farms, a more general relief would have been afforded to the country.¹

The burden of taxation in England was heavy but only part of it appeared in the national budget. Besides the taxes levied by the central government, there were a number of rates levied by the local authorities, such as the County Rate, the Highway Rate, the Church Rate, the Militia Rate and the Poor Rate. This latter gave assistance to the poor of each parish, and it was much the heaviest of all the local rates.² In this economic crisis, some of the mining parishes near Hodnet, where the mines had been shut down, served notice on the authorities of their utter inability to support their poor, and asked the magistrates for help from the other parishes. "In consequence," wrote Heber to his parliamentary friend, Wilmot,

1 Ibid. p.467.

2 Halevy, Elie - England in 1815. p.377.

Hodnet has been ordered.....to send in a statement of its poor-rates, in order to determine the proportion in which we ought to be assessed for this object. My flock breathe nothing but war and defiance, as might be expected from persons who have murmured most grievously under the necessary burdens of their own parishioners.¹

Heber recognised the legal aspect of the case but pointed out the great inequality in the basis of determining the rates which then existed, and claimed that the basis must be equalized if justice was to be done.

In this series of letters which Heber wrote to Wilmot revealing his awakening social consciousness as he came to grips with the problems of transition, there is one in particular which is noteworthy for the insight it provides into his mind and spirit. Wilmot, recently arrived back in England, was asked by Heber what he was going to do. Reginald suggested,

the times are favourable for one way of aiming at distinction, and I cannot help thinking you might do well to try your hand at a pamphlet 'On the causes of the present discontents etc.'Such a pamphlet as I should expect from you, might, I think, be of real service to the country, in which there seems to prevail, at present, among the higher ranks, a singular blindness to the feelings of the lower half of the country, and with the lower orders a still more fatal disposition to view through a very distorted medium every action of their superiors, and every circumstance of the real situation of the country.²

He went on to suggest ways in which this theme could be developed,

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I.p.480.

2 Ibid. p.445.

and the slant the article could take while appealing to both groups. In this suggestion he gives us a clear indication of his developing spirit as a conciliator. Seeking to serve his country and recognising truths on both sides of the question, he sought to bridge the apparently widening gap. It was in the expression of this spirit that one of his great contributions to his age was to be made, although his opportunity did not come for several more years. Out of the experience of the long war of the French Revolution, and of the effects of the Industrial Revolution within his own country, Heber learned the effects and benefits of conciliation that the greater goal might be achieved. Only in this way can we understand the growth of Heber's character, from that of one who might have been a prejudiced unbending spokesman of the Established Church, to one who, while faithfully upholding the Church, saw the necessity of co-operative effort to conquer the problems facing Christianity in a foreign culture.

During these trying years, Heber suffered financially, spiritually and physically as did large numbers of people in England. The completion of the new rectory and its furnishing meant a considerable debt which he met by a loan from a friend and with the backing of Richard; but in 1816, a failure of the Old Bank at Nantwich caused him considerable loss and bitter disappointment.¹ On the 27th March of the same year he suffered

1 Cholmondely Collection. MS. Letter.

a far greater loss in the sudden death of his younger brother, Thomas. The death of Thomas, who had been his close companion since childhood days, came unexpectedly when he was believed to be recovering from "a severe affection of the spine which was attributed to some hurts he had received in hunting". Being close to the same age, with the same education at Neasdon and Brasenose, and associated in the same profession, they had been bound in close brotherly affection. The letter which Reginald wrote to Thornton after his brother's tragic death is filled with the remorse which he felt in not having prepared Thomas for the inevitable and reveals his extremely sensitive nature as a priest and brother.¹ His concern for the ill was deepened after the shock of his brother's death and he allowed no opportunity to pass by wherein he could bring spiritual help to members of his parish, irrespective of how humble some of them might be. Every spring a number of cases of typhus fever were reported in his parish, and it was while making calls on the sick that he himself became a victim of this illness. Of this illness he wrote:

You have probably heard of the severe campaign of blistering, bleeding, and all the other 'ings' in the materia medica in which I have myself been engaged, and which eventually involved my whole family, from the mistress of the house to the kitchen-maid, in the same active operations.²

1 Vide Appendix 6. "On Death of Rev. Thomas C. Heber".
Thornton Collection - MS. Letter.

2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol. II. p. 40.

On 5th July, 1818, there was great rejoicing in the Heber household for with the birth of Barbara Mary it seemed that their hopes and prayers had been answered. The long awaited child was safely delivered. Although a healthy infant at birth she was only a few weeks old before a serious illness left them with slight hope of her life and then came a turn for the better. As Reginald expressed it to Thornton,

Thank God! She wrestled through it surprisingly, but it left her a skeleton; since that time her progress has been very rapid, and as favourable as we could hope or desire, and she is really now such a baby as parents exult to show, as plump, clean and stout as anybody nine weeks old need be.¹

His feeling of joy was not to be long lasting, for on Christmas Eve the little one expired after a severe illness of several days. From Catton in Staffordshire, where they had gone on a visit, Heber again wrote to his understanding friend.

Emily....is, I believe, fully resigned, and sensible of God's abundant mercy, even when His afflictions fall heaviest. I am myself more cut down than I thought I should, but I hope not impatient; though I cannot help thinking that whatever other children I may be blessed with, I shall never love any like this little one.....But I do not forget that to have possessed her at all, and to have enjoyed the pleasure of looking at her and caressing her for six months was God's free gift, and still less do I forget that He who has taken her will, at length, I hope, restore her to us.²

1 Thornton Collection - MS. Letter No.56.

2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I. p.500.

While Heber reacted in a normal way to the trials and disappointments of life which came to him during those difficult post-war years of readjustment, the testimony of those who knew him then shows that no lasting feeling of bitterness or frustration manifested itself in his personality. Rather did he seem to grow more patient, sympathetic and cheerful. In the trials of life there was being forged a radiant Christ-like spirit which was ever to be associated with the name of Reginald Heber.

A glowing testimony to the spirit of the Heber home life and his charm and personality has been given by Maria Leycester who was a welcome visitor at the rectory during the latter half of his Hodnet ministry. Maria was a daughter of the Rev. Oswald Leycester, Vicar of Stoke-upon-Terne, a nearby parish. She was a young girl of fourteen when her mother passed away; and two years later her father married a cousin of his first wife. Maria, after the loss of her mother, had formed the habit of walking on Sunday afternoons over to the church at Hodnet to attend Reginald Heber's preaching service. Her acquaintance with the young rector and his wife, begun in this way, broadened into friendship as they welcomed the young girl into their home, first on Sundays, and soon on daily visits. Few happily married ministerial couples have resisted the temptation to act in the role of matchmakers in the lives of some of their best loved young people and the Hebers were no exception in this; Maria, as a young lady, became engaged to his curate, the Rev. Mr Stow,

who was to accompany Heber to India and lose his life there. These extracts from her letters, as an impressionable girl of nineteen, to her friend Miss Hibbert, reflect the happy experiences she had shared with the Hebers.

May 24, 1817 - I have just spent two delightful days at Hodnet rectory. Oh, the charms of a rectory inhabited by a Reginald Heber or an Edward Stanley!¹ To be sure splendour and luxury sink into the ground before such real happiness.

June 7, 1817 - I have spent a very agreeable week; but you will be very much surprised when you learn that two of the days we had the Reginald Hebers here, and the rest I spent at Alderley. I never saw, or rather heard Mr. Reginald Heber so agreeable, though, indeed, I always say this of the last time of seeing him, but really, his stories are quite inexhaustible - the more he tells, the more he seems to have to tell. His brother, Mr. Heber, was here likewise one day, and was very agreeable too; but not so loveable as Reginald. How happy I am to be able to say I love him! I may thank Mrs R.H. for that. I dine with them on Saturday, that I may ride with them in the evening and in short, I see them continually.

June 14 - A most delightful evening, with the Hebers - Reginald reading and reciting verses, and telling various entertaining stories. Late in the evening he recited a poem of Coleridge's, "The Ancient Mariner".

Dec. 14, 1818 - My brothers and I have had such a pleasant visit at Hodnet! There were only Mr. and Mrs. R. Heber, Mr. Heber and Mr. Augustus Hare² there. The latter is the oddest and most agreeable person I have seen for a very long time - very clever and enthusiastic, but quite

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- 1 The Rev. Edward Stanley (1779-1849) Rector of Alderley, Cheshire, had married Maria's older sister, Catherine, 8th May, 1810. He was a friend of Reginald Heber. He became Bishop of Norwich after an outstanding pastorate of 32 years.
 - 2 Augustus Hare (1792-1834), a cousin of Mrs. Heber. Later married Maria Leycester.

unlike other people, which is a relief sometimes, for everyday people are so common in this world. I was very happy in reading some of my German with the dear Reginald, and found myself infinitely advanced since the last time I read with him.

Mar 25, 1819 - I have been spending two whole days with the Reginald Hebers; he was very, very delightful, and our evenings were most snug and comfortable. Reginald Heber made songs for us as fast as we could sing them.

Jan.17, 1820 - All last week Charles and I passed at Hodnet, and I need not say if we enjoyed it. Only Miss Heber was there, and Mr. Stow, a friend of Reginald's, who is at present living at Hodnet as his curate....We have every kind of amusement in the evenings, in dancing, singing, and acting.....In the morning one of the party read Scott's new novel *Ivanhoe* aloud to the others.¹

Augustus J.C.Hare in writing of the contribution of these happy experiences with Reginald and Emily Heber upon the life of Maria, his mother, stated,

No one could live constantly within the influence of his cheerful active life, devoted, either at home or amongst his parishioners, to the good of others, yet with the most entire unostentation, without praying that his mantle might fall upon them.²

No finer testimony could be asked!

Another testimony came from a young Oxford Fellow who was in his life time to help shape the history of the Church of England, John Keble. As part of the programme of the Oxford Commemoration in June 1820, Reginald Heber's poem "Palestine"

1 Hare, Augustus J.C. - Memorials of a Quiet Life. Vol.I. pp.21-38.

2 Ibid. p.19.

which had some years previously been set to music as an oratorio by Dr.Crotch, Professor of Music, was to be performed. Mr.Robert Southey, noted writer and Poet Laureate of England, was present by invitation to receive the honorary degree of D.C.L. Thus for these reasons Heber and Southey were present at Oxford, and John Keble's letter to his friend throws much light upon his estimation of the Rector of Hodnet.

I had the great delight this last Commemoration of being introduced to the two public characters, whom of all others I should rather wish to know, Southey and Reginald Heber. I liked both exceedingly, but Heber decidedly best: he is so remarkably unaffected in his manner; I watched him all the time they were performing "Palestine" in the Theatre, and he did not attitudinize in the least, nor seem conscious of being the chief character in the room; and then his style of conversation is so particularly kind and hearty. Southey has a good deal of the same excellencies; but he gives you the idea of a man forbearing to display himself, Heber, of one into whose head no such thing ever entered.¹

In the previous years a measure of ecclesiastical recognition had come to Heber. In 1817, his father-in-law, the Dean of St.Asaph, arranged with the Bishop of St.Asaph to have him appointed as a Prebendary of the Cathedral. The following year he appeared at St.Mary's, Oxford, as one of the university preachers. He had been nominated by Dr.Van Mildert, Regius Professor. Heber's comment to his wife on this opportunity is

1 Coleridge, J.T. - Memoir of John Keble, p.94.

especially interesting, in view of the general estimation of his unassuming nature.

This offer gives me pleasure as a mark of my Oxford friends, especially Dr. Van Mildert, having approved my sermons (Bampton); and it may, as a further opportunity of distinguishing myself be advantageous.¹

The same driving stimulus of ambition which had motivated Heber's scholarship at Oxford University was still prodding him in his profession and avocation. It is a strange paradox that ambition and modesty were so finely blended in Reginald Heber that his friends and associates were only conscious of his supreme humility.

In this period he discussed with John Thornton the possibility and desirability of a union between the two Church Missionary Societies. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts had kept alive the flame of missions in the darkness of the eighteenth century. Its prosecution of the cause was hampered by the spiritual torpor of the time in which it had been working. But its accomplishments were not enough by the end of the century to prevent some of the more enthusiastic Evangelicals from discussing how fresh exertions for the conversion of the heathen could be made. Discussions had taken place for some years before the London Missionary Society was

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I. p.448.

formed in 1795. This was started by a group of Evangelical and Dissenting ministers but the union was not altogether satisfactory as the clergy held that their missionary activities ought to be carried on in direct connection with and under the sanction of the Church to which they belonged. On 12th April, 1799, the Church Missionary Society had been actually formed.¹ The Rev. John Venn presided, and the loved rector of Clapham had several of his faithful laymen supporting the Society; these included William Wilberforce and Henry Thornton.

Reginald Heber after discussing the desirability of union between these two societies, felt so strongly about it that he wrote to the Bishop, under whose patronage the C.M.S. worked. He had been induced (John Thornton's influence?) to join it,

as, apparently, most active, and as employing
with more wisdom than the elder corporation,
those powerful means of obtaining popular
support,.....

And he did not repent of his choice.

But, why, my Lord, (may I be permitted to ask)
should there be two Societies for the same
precise object?

He then launched into the desirability of unification for greater benefits, and suggested ways in which it could be done. Here again the conciliating spirit of Heber expressed itself, on "another bone of contention" which with others lessened the

1 Overton, John - The English Church in the Nineteenth Century. pp.253-8.

public utility of clergymen. The advantages of such a union he felt to be great both for the advancement of the cause of missions, and that "it might go very far towards healing the breach which unhappily exists in our establishment."¹

Nothing came of his zeal in this matter, unless it was the deepening of his conviction that there are times and places where the spirit of conciliation could avail much for a great end.

The turn for the better in the affairs of Reginald Heber came in the spring of 1821 with the successful birth of Emily,² of whom her aunt Mary wrote to Richard,

Reginald and Emily are well and so is our little niece who I think you will admire, she is very like Reginald.³

Another of his dreams came true in the late summer, when his brother, Richard Heber, was elected as member of parliament for Oxford University.⁴ In 1806 upon his return from his Northern European Tour, Reginald had thrown himself with energetic activity into the fray to help elect his brother, who as an independent had contested the elections of the candidate Abbott, nominated by the Dean of Christ Church. The influence of Christ Church and that of the government as a whole had been too much for him and he lost out in an honourable

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I.p.493.

2 Emily Heber (31st March 1821- 1901). She married Algernon Percy.

3 Cholmondeley, R.H. - The Heber Letters, p.288.

4 Ibid. p.288.

defeat.¹ Again in 1814 a canvass was held in his behalf and in this Reginald had been active, but no vacancy developed at that time. In 1821 Sir William Scott received his peerage and there was a by-election at Oxford. Reginald again bent every effort to solicit votes for his brother by writing to his friends and using his personal influence through friends to gain support for Richard's candidacy. The joy Reginald found in the successful contest was described in a letter to Charlotte Dod, written a week after the election:

I have had, however, the happiness of being more with my brother than I have been for a long time, of finding that I was not only useful to him, but that he appreciated and loved my zeal, and at length of being one of the main agents in defending his character and securing his success in what has been the main object of his life.²

And his cup of happiness for his sister Mary was filled to overflowing in the following June, when she was married to the Rev. Charles Cholmondeley who had recently come as the Curate of Moreton Saye, where Mary and her mother lived in the parsonage. Thirty-five years had slipped by before she found "a rather shy odd fellow, but when well known (is) highly to be valued for his numerous good qualities and excellent disposition".³

¹Ibid. p.213.

² Smith, George - Bishop Heber. pp.75-6.

³ Cholmondeley, R.H. - The Heber Letters, pp.286, 293-5.

Mary, nine years older than the young curate, seems to have been an excellent manager. Richard conferred the Rectory of Morton, in Yorkshire, upon him, and Reginald offered to give all the emoluments of Moreton to him.

Early in the same year a long time friend of the Heber brothers received an important post in the Government. Charles Watkin Williams Wynn, son of one of the leading families of the County of Denbigh, and a college friend of Richard's, was elected as President of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India. Reginald Heber, without realization of the importance this appointment was going to have in his own career, hastened to send his congratulations to his neighbour and friend.

I have, indeed, I will not say a stronger, but a better reason for my joy than that which arises from personal regard, and the recollection of many acts of friendship to me and mine, inas-
:much as I cannot but feel pleasure in seeing your distinguished talents more useful to the country, at a time when, Heaven knows, there is abundant need of all that high talents, high honour, and amiable manners can do to save it.¹

His feeling of the worthiness of Wynn for this post was not misplaced. The nephew of Lord William Windham Grenville honourably served as a member of parliament for fifty-three years, and was "father" of the House of Commons when he died in 1850.

Fortune was smiling not only on the members of the family

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II.p.51.

and influential friends of the Hebers, but on Reginald himself. Although he deeply loved his country parish, it did enforce upon him a certain isolation from contact with his friends in literary fields and parliamentary pursuits centering round London. He came to look upon an annual trip to London as marking another year in his growth. Several of his friends of University days, and C.W.W.Wynn, Robert J.Wilmot and Robert H. Inglis were members of famed Lincoln's Inn. In the spring of 1819, when it became known that Dr.Van Mildert, whose impressive preaching had held sway in their chapel for seven years, was to resign, some of Heber's friends suggested that he submit his name for consideration as a candidate for the position. Partly in answer to their urging and partly in response to his own desire for a larger field of expression, he did so, though recognizing that he had slight chances of success. The leading candidate was Dr.Charles Lloyd who was strongly backed by a large group headed by Mr.Robert Peel, and he was the successful contestant. Reginald Heber, in a characteristically honest appraisal, wrote to Wilmot:

So my talents 'in the eloquential line', as I once saw it happily expressed in an American newspaper, are not likely to be displayed at Lincoln's Inn. I was not much disappointed at being obliged to relinquish my pursuit. I should, indeed, have liked the situation very much, but the cold water had been so gradually applied to my hopes, that their final refrigeration, when it came, was hardly perceptible.¹

1 Ibid. Vol.I. p.514.

Dr.Lloyd, however, only held the distinguished pulpit less than three years before resigning in order to succeed Dr.Van Mildert as Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, and Heber's friends again started their electioneering. This time he was opposed by Dr.Edward Maltby. He felt that the Whigs who were "Numerous and mighty" on the list of the benchers, might give the decision to Maltby who was of their own party. He recognized that he, having "no party character at all, could only oppose by private friendship and interest." An insight into Heber's mind on this occasion is found in his letter to Thornton just prior to the election:

I hope, in my anxiety to obtain the preachship of Lincoln's Inn, the idea that I may be useful in such a pulpit, and with the sort of audience which I may expect to see round me there, has borne no inconsiderable part. Yet I will own the wish to see more of the valuable friends from whom I am now in a great measure separated, has very much, perhaps principally, contributed to it. I feel by no means sanguine of success, indeed rather the contrary, as Maltby is, in all respects, a formidable opponent. If I fail, I trust, however, the disappointment will not be great; and I am well convinced, that if I fail, it will be better for me that I should do so, though I may not at present be able to perceive the reason.¹

When the ballot was counted, it was found that Reginald Heber had been elected to the coveted position of preacher to Lincoln's Inn, an office which few had held for any length of

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II.p.54.

time without further advancement.¹ So many Lincoln's Inn preachers had stepped from this step to the top level of the hierarchy that F.D.Maurice, who was elected as chaplain to the Inn a quarter of a century after Heber,

never sought to be Preacher of Lincoln's Inn, leaving that office, he said, 'to some fashionable preacher who is likely to be a Bishop'! ²

Heber welcomed the challenge of such a distinguished congregation. The situation, which would not take him away from Hodnet for more than three months in the year, was in all respects a most agreeable one.

Reginald Heber, after fifteen years of devoted and consecrated service in the obscure country parish of Hodnet, had reached the threshold of a greater area and level of expression. He had lived close to his people and their needs, as he interpreted, by preaching and living, the Christian message of "The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man as revealed in the Lordship of Jesus Christ". With his people, he had lived through a turbulent period of his nation's history, which tried the souls of men. In his family life he had found love and joy; he had passed through testing times of illness, of loss and grief. His faith had been forged strong and reliant under the hammering of adversity. The natural cheerful

1 Spilsbury, W.H. - Lincoln's Inn and Its Library. pp.85-7.

2 Hurst, Gerald - A Short History of Lincoln's Inn. p.75.

disposition, which had won him many friends during his University years, had drawn people of all classes to him in his ministry. His love of literary interests might have made him an inactive parish priest, but he had known his parishioners and had been known by them. He had exemplified the kind of Churchman in the parish that Robert Southey, Poet Laureate, urged his young friend, James White, a divinity student at Cambridge University, to be.¹ He had given unstintingly of himself and his wealth.

As it had been at Oxford, and at Hodnet, so it was in the larger circle of Church affairs. He was known favourably by leaders and followers in both parties of the Church. To the High Churchmen, he seemed close to them in his sincere devotion to the Church Establishment; to the Evangelicals his espousal of the causes of the Bible Society, and the Church Missionary Society, coupled with his abiding piety, indicated his affinity with their aims.

He was of both groups in spirit, only in so far as their ideals served the larger good, the Church. Actually, though later both groups were to claim him, he was never a member of either party. Heber considered them

the two fiercest foolishlest parties that ever divided a Church - the High Churchmen and the Evangelicals.²

1 Vide Appendix 6. Southey's Letter to James White.

2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II. pp.5-6.

Reginald Heber, blending the best of both groups, was far too "liberal" for either party, and for want of a more descriptive name must be recognised as a Liberal. There was no liberal party. If there had been Heber would not have joined it, I dare say. He saw the party movement as dividing the seamless garment of the Church, and anything that did that was to be shunned. Heber in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, must be counted with that small number of outstanding Liberals¹ outside the Parties whose great talents and culture contributed conspicuously to the life of the Church.²

1 William Paley (1743-1805), great theological writer; Samuel Parr (1746-1824), greatest scholar of his day; The Rev. Sydney Smith (1771-1845), noted wit and reformer; Henry Bathurst (1744-1837), Bishop of Norwich; Edward Stanley (1779-1849), Rector of Alderley, later Bishop of Norwich; Edward Copleston (1776-1849), Provost of Oriel, Bishop of Llandaff; Richard Whately (1787-1863), Archbishop of Dublin; and Thomas Arnold (1795-1842), Master of Rugby School.

2 Overton, John - The English Church in the Nineteenth Century. pp.110-124.

Chapter Six

POETRY AND WRITINGS

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Writing served Heber as an avocation during his ministry at Hodnet. It provided not only an outlet for him, but also served as a contact with the world of letters, which he enjoyed. As one follows his developing interests in writing poetry, hymns, reviews and biography; it soon becomes apparent that he is not using his creative efforts to satisfy any outward expression of his ego. From one point of view this is surprising. When he left Oxford, according to the testimony of Sir Charles Gray,¹ Reginald Heber was "beyond all question of comparison, the most distinguished student of his time."² He lived in an atmosphere of favour, admiration and regard; his society was courted by young and old. Few could have lived through this experience or a similar one without having had their heads turned under the adulation received; yet Reginald did, without gaining an undue sense of his own importance. In view of his experience, and recognising the strong ambition for scholastic fame which had motivated him during his University years, it seems surprising that he made no strenuous efforts to increase his fame with some effort in the literary field. This is perhaps best explained by his feelings of modesty and humbleness which had kept him from being spoiled by the

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- 1 Gray, Sir Charles Edward (1785-1865), educated University College, Oxford, B.A., 1806; Fellow of Oriel, 1808; Chief Justice, Court of Bengal, 1825.
 - 2 Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine Vol. XXII, No. CXXXII, Nov. 1827. p. 623.

attention paid to him at Oxford, and which also served to keep him from "rushing into print". Certainly, his failure to have some of his work printed for several years after leaving the University was not because he had written nothing of interest worth printing, for he had.

Reginald had the material for a long magazine article or even for a small book, if he had chosen to use the letters and the Journal which he had kept on his travels into Northern and Central Europe. The time was right, for there was great interest, especially in England, about the people of Russia and their customs. Long a customer of English traders, she was at that time considered an ally. His style of writing description was clear and detailed and he had the knack of presenting realistically the places and people he had visited. His curiosity was great and the results, for the reader of his letters, rewarding. John Thornton had considered having his letters published, and perhaps it may have been this very fact which deterred Reginald from doing so. As it developed, John never published his, but many of Reginald's notes were incorporated into a series of widely read traveller's books. Dr. Edward Daniel Clarke in 1800 had covered much the same ground which young Heber and Thornton visited in 1805-1806. While preparing for his books, which were to cover travels in various countries of Europe, Asia and Africa, Dr. Clarke evidently heard of Reginald's Journal and received permission from Heber to extract some of his observations upon Russia and the Crimea for use, with proper

acknowledgment.

In the "Preface to Part the First" of Dr. Clarke's series of travel books which were published from 1810 to 1816, in the words of acknowledgment to those who contributed to the accomplishment of the undertaking, there is this credit:

To the Reverend Reginald Heber, late Fellow of All Soul's College, Oxford, the author is indebted for the valuable Manuscript Journal which afforded the extracts given in the Notes. In addition to Mr. Heber's habitual accuracy, may be mentioned the statistical information, which stamps a peculiar value on his observations; this has enriched the volume by communications which the author himself was incompetent to supply.¹

These extracts were hailed by one reviewer "as the jewels of the volume, conveying more information in a few words"² than would be expected from any but the best of known travellers.

It was not until early in 1809 that Reginald completed and published his first poetic offering since "Palestine" six years before. The poem, "Europe", had been started one night in Dresden, Prussia, when his sleep had been disturbed by the beating of drums and the marching feet of troops going forward to meet Napoleon's forces. After the long interruption, he again started work on it and soon sent it off to the press. He commented to John concerning it:

1 Clarke, E.D. - Travels in Various Countries of Europe, Asia and Africa.

2 Quarterly Review, Vol. 35, March 1827. p. 452.

Both their name 'Europe' and the moment at which they are published is an unfortunate one; but I am glad that while Spain yet exists, I shall have borne my testimony in her favour.¹

Heber's poem, ending with the line, "But Spain, the brave, the virtuous, shall be free", must have sounded like the voice of a prophet shouting in the darkness of the wilderness. Sir John Moore and his British Army had been badly mauled in the battle of Corunna, Spain, by the French. This attempt to liberate Spain had cost England the lives of one of her best generals, many distinguished officers, and several hundred soldiers. Rarely has a poem of faith in a country's future been less propitiously published. It was Heber's testimony, however, and, with characteristic generosity, he decided that,

whatever profits may arise from them it is my present intention to apply to the Fund for the Spanish Patriots, and the Distressed Finlanders - unless circumstances shall dictate some better Charity.²

It was natural Reginald would find great satisfaction in his literary endeavours. Both poetry and prose intrigued his interest, and this interest continued, with alternating emphasis, during the whole period of his Hodnet ministry. His eager interest in both were mentioned in his letter of 15th February, 1809, to Thornton. In this letter, he first mentions

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I. p.351.

2 Thornton Collection - MS. Letter No.37.

his interest in the new "Quarterly Review".

will you allow me to solicit your assistance in procuring recruits for the Quarterly Review, a work in which several of our common friends are likely to be engaged, and which may serve to set some limits to the despotic authority of the Edinburgh (Review).¹

Reginald also procured R.W.Hay and R.J.Wilmot as later contributors.

At that time the powerful "Edinburgh Review" held the field of periodical journalism. Periodicals had languished in the latter half of the eighteenth century. The first of the great periodicals in the revival was the "Edinburgh Review" founded in 1802. From the outset this magazine, founded by three unknown Scottish Advocates, Francis Jeffery and Henry Brougham (later to be Lord Chancellor), and Sydney Smith, then a private tutor in Edinburgh, was a success. Its politics were Whig and its literary standard was extremely conservative. It soon won a place as an almost infallible guide in literary taste. However, its political violence as expressed by its editor, Jeffery, created bitter opposition, as did the editorial policy which resulted in the frequent excising and emending of many of the contributors' articles.

The "Quarterly Review" was begun in reaction to the "Edinburgh". It was Tory in tone, and was designed to defend Church and State from the Whig attacks. It had, from the

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I. p.351.

beginning, the patronage and support of the leading statesmen of the prevailing political party in the State. William Gifford was its first editor, although the position had been offered to Walter Scott who declined; he, however, became one of its principal supporters and secured, among other writers, the Heber brothers, Richard and Reginald, as contributors. Robert Southey became one of its chief contributors. The magazine was published by John Murray of London.

The spirit of opposition in which the "Quarterly" was born is clear in Walter Scott's note to Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe,

The Hebers are engaged, item, Rogers, Southey, Moore (Anacreon), and others whose reputation Jeffrey has murdered, and who are rising to cry woe upon him, like the ghosts in King Richard.¹

Though this letter was written in the previous year, Reginald was sympathetic but cautious. This is disclosed in the letter to Thornton already quoted. He suggested to Thornton that

Charles Hoare or the Grants would be very valuable auxiliaries².....I have, myself, refused to undertake giving anything, but very likely shall hereafter, if I have time, and if the first number gives me a favourable specimen of their calibre and opinions.³

Undoubtedly, his plans to be married in the spring made it difficult to undertake any serious literary work. Walter

1 Smiles, Samuel - Memoirs and Correspondence of the late John Murray. p.104.

2 Thornton Collection - MS. Letter No.37.

3 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I. p.351.

Scott in a letter to Gifford, the intended editor, had recommended that "the Rev.Reginald Heber would be an excellent coadjutor". The first numbers, although showing promise, were only fairly successful; and Mr.Murray, the publisher, fearing failure, endeavoured to procure a better array of contributors.

Amongst these were some very eminent men.
Mr John Barrow, of the Admiralty; the Rev.
Reginald Heber, Mr Robert Grant (afterwards
Sir Robert, the Indian Judge), Mr.Stephens, etc.¹

Robert Grant was one of the men that Reginald had suggested that Thornton should interest.

Reginald Heber's first review, on Ker Porter's "Travelling Sketches in Russia and Sweden in the years 1805-08", appeared in the November issue, 1809. In this he set the style for his reviews which were to follow. Primarily, his reviews were similar to the style of the day; which was to use the book as a peg upon which to hang the reviewer's thoughts, upon that, and any related subject! He was less inclined to stray far afield than some of the other reviewers. His first article enabled him to draw upon his background, provided by the Russian tour. This review, written in a satirical vein, concluded,

On the whole, we dismiss Mr.P's travels as a book, which will seldom find a place in a library, but may lie without offence on a table; which, if not the best, is far from

1 Smiles, Samuel - Memoirs and Correspondence of the late John Murray. p.165.

the worst account of one of the most interesting countries in the world.¹

John Thornton, by letter, approved his effort; this gratified Heber and in replying he stated,

I intend, as far as my necessary business will give me time, to contribute frequently to the Quarterly Review, as it serves to keep up my acquaintance with several interesting subjects, which I might else, perhaps, neglect.²

In the following three years he was represented in the periodical by at least an article each year. "The Present State of Turkey", a review of Thomas Thornton's book, was followed by "Last Years of the Reign of Gustavus Adolphus the Fourth, late King of Sweden"; and with this assignment, he learned how irritating an editor can be, for, as he wrote to Wilmot,

I am a good deal vexed with Gifford; after I had toiled to get my Swedish review in time, he postponed it to another number.³

At that time, he jokingly suggested setting up a rival magazine with four of his friends as contributors. On another occasion he commented, in a more serious vein, to his friend, R.W.Hay, whom he had persuaded to contribute an occasional article,

Our friend Gifford is a little unreasonable on busy men like you and me, who cannot be expected to give up so much time to articles for the Quarterly, as those who have less to do. B----- indeed is a case which may be urged against us; but he has acquired all his ideas, and has only

1 Quarterly Review, Vol.2, No.IV. Nov.1809, p.301.

2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I. p.362.

3 Ibid. p.389.

to write them down; at our age we are obliged to read to enable us to write.¹

An assignment, which he found intriguing and perplexing, was described in a letter to R.J.Wilmot. It furnishes a candid insight into the peculiar art of reviewing as practised in the early nineteenth century.

I have, to say the truth, had the most perplexing and least satisfactory job on my hands, for several weeks past, which I was embarked in since I translated Spectators into Latin for missing Chapel at Brazen Nose. It has been the licking my peculiar ideas on Pindar's style, into the form of a short article for the Quarterly, purporting to be a review of the obscure translations of Pindar which appeared about a year ago; but in fact intended, as you suggested, to introduce one of my own attempts which I have subjoined to the article. It is, at present, a short review.....²

The article appeared in the Quarterly Review for 1811, and, in the following year, the translations were re-published with other poems. A friendly critic later said of them:

It may be doubted whether the deep-mouthed Theban is not made to speak too much after the manner of the great minstrel of Scotland; still they are executed with genuine spirit and elegance.³

Praise for the Autumn number (November, 1809) of the magazine was bestowed by Dr.Edward Coplestone in a letter to Richard

1 Ibid. p.405.

2 Ibid. p.369.

3 Quarterly Review, Vol.35, No.LXX, March 1827, p.452.

Heber, who (from correspondence which still exists) seems to have been even more interested in the welfare of the journal.

Let me congratulate you upon the appearance of the ablest number of the Q.R. which (by universal consent) has yet been published.¹

At about this time, Dr. Crotch, Professor of Music at Oxford, had completed his Oratorio setting Heber's poem, "Palestine", to music. A publishing firm, Longman and Rees, in anticipation of a revival of interest in and popularity of the prize poem, approached Reginald with an invitation to prepare a collected edition of his poems. In this small book appeared not only "Palestine", "Europe", and the previously mentioned translations of Pindar; but also the lines spoken in honour of Lord Grenville's installation as the Chancellor of Oxford University, and an "Epitaph on a Young Naval Officer". This moving poem had been designed for a tomb in a seaport town in North Wales, and had especial meaning for his wife and her family.

Sailor! if vigour nerve thy frame,
If to high deeds thy soul is strung,
Revere this stone that gives to fame,
The brave, the virtuous, and the young!²

This epitaph commemorated the death of Emily's brother, Captain Conway Shipley, who had perished in a daring attempt to cut out an enemy's vessel from the Tagus with the boats of

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- 1 Cholmondeley, R.H. - The Heber Letters, p.243.
 - 2 Heber, Reginald - Poems and Translations, p.142.

His Majesty's Frigate La Nymphe, 22nd April, 1808. A veteran of sixteen years of naval service, he died at the age of twenty-six years.

In this small but interesting collection of poems one is also impressed by the dedication, which is to Richard, Reginald's older brother,

As a tribute of gratitude to the talent, taste, and affection which he has uniformly exerted in encouraging and directing the studies of his brother.

It would be interesting to know how well this attractive collection of Heber's early poems sold; but the records of Longmans, Green & Co., publishers, which would furnish this information, were destroyed in an air raid in World War Two.

The articles in the "Quarterly Review" were not signed. This omission led to many abuses, and earned for the editor, and the periodical, a reputation for savagery. Occasionally, the reviewer won approbation. This was true concerning Heber's review of "De L'Allemagne" by Madame La Baronne de Stael Holstein. It appeared as if from the pen of a 'young lawyer', but is acknowledged by Heber in his letter to R.J.Wilmot, 20th April, 1814. Madam de Stael wrote to the publisher enquiring for the name of the writer, and praised his grasp of the subject and exposition of it. To another person she remarked,

that of all the reviews on her work, (and she had carefully read them all), this was the only one which had raised her opinion of the talents and acquirements of the English.¹

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I.p.418.

Gifford's next assignment contained great interest for Heber. It was to be a short article on the Cossacks, a subject in which there was great interest in England, as it concerned a colourful people who were part of their Russian allies. This short article Gifford thought he could manage "to pin as a critique on some new publication."¹ This project, reviving memories of his travels in that distant country, was paramount in his literary hours for three weeks. At the end of that time he discovered his short article had grown into a fair sized book. It was laid aside, however, when it seemed there might be an election at Oxford, and Reginald was busy canvassing on behalf of his brother. Other circumstances prevented the final completion of Heber's "History of the Cossacks" and it did not see the light of publication until it was appended to the first volume of "The Life of Reginald Heber, D.D.", edited by Mrs. Heber in 1830.

Much of the young rector's study time, during the year 1814-15, was spent in preparation for his series of Bampton lectures; hence these years mark the low point of his productivity as a regular contributor to the "Quarterly". During this period, his finances were severely strained by the cost of building and furnishing his new eighteen room rectory, and by the bank failure at Nantwich.

1 Thornton Collection - MS. Letter No.50.

Perhaps it was this monetary need which stimulated his mind and pen, for in the next seven years he doubled his contributions to the "Quarterly Review". Southey claimed, "The most profitable line of composition was reviewing". The page rate in the beginning was ten guineas, and later it was doubled. It was interesting writing to Reginald, and the financial return was attractive.

His literary pursuits were never for any long interval suspended; more varied and incursive than those of almost any of his contemporaries, they found riches in every soil. It is curious to see the raw materials from which he occasionally worked, and the poetry which he could extract from a solitary fact. While reviewing Sir John Malcolm's "History of Persia", he introduced a prophecy of the death of Timour or Tamerlane. As he wrote the review, he felt the stirring of the Muse, and produced the poem, "Timour's Council". On another occasion, in looking over some prose translations of the Shah Nameh of Ferdusi, and the Moallakah of Hareth, he was strongly impressed by the picturesque beauty of the oriental imagery which they presented; and from them, he versified two of the passages.

As a reviewer he was assigned the books on history, travel, and poetry. Each was a subject in which he was deeply interested. This love and his reputation sometimes led him into a situation which promised more than he had anticipated. As he confided to E.D.Davenport, an old acquaintance,

I have been a little alarmed on receiving a parcel from Mr. Crawford of six quarto volumes of manuscript, each of them,.....being the travels of Mr Kinneir through Asia Minor, respecting the merits of which I am to give an opinion, according to a rash promise which I made when I was with you. I was not then quite aware of the bulk of the undertaking, but must now persevere, though the journey be as protracted as that of the ten thousand Greeks through the same route.¹

But simply respect of making good his promise, was not all that Heber gained from this task, for, three years later, he prepared an article on Kinneir's Travels, as compared with Rennel's retreat of the ten thousand.

The leading contributor to the "Quarterly Review" for many years from its founding was Robert Southey, a common friend of Walter Scott, Richard Heber, and C.W.W.Wynn, and it was through these last two individuals that Reginald frequently met him socially. Of Southey, H.C.Robinson is said to have once remarked, "Literature is now Southey's trade; he is a manufacturer, and his study is his workshop."² It was a fair remark, in the sense that his talent and ability to produce excellent literary works was prodigious. The second volume of his important work, "History of the Brazils", was reviewed by Reginald in 1817; and three years later he wrote on Southey's "Life of Wesley". Both works interested him, but it was relative to the latter that he wrote:

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I.p.447.

2 Halevy, Elie - England in 1815. p.510.

How I shall succeed in it, I do not yet know; it is no easy matter to give Wesley his due praise, at the same time that I am to distinguish all that was blameable in his conduct and doctrines; and it is a very difficult matter indeed to write on such a subject at all without offending one or both of the two fiercest and foolishlest parties that ever divided a Church - the High Churchmen and the Evangelicals.¹

With a fine discrimination and impartiality he held the balance between the Arminian John Wesley, with his idea of sinless perfection, and the Calvinist George Whitefield, with the other extreme of predestination and reprobation. Heber's conclusion was that no common blessing must wait on the man who, while he avoids schism, endeavours to rival John Wesley in piety, self-denial, activity, and boundless charity.

He succeeded in his task at least so far as the author was concerned. Southey, although not an intimate friend of Reginald, did make some interesting comments about him in a letter to Henry Taylor, four years after the death of his associate in the work of the "Quarterly Review".

He had a hurried, nervous manner in private society, which covered much more ardour and feeling than you would have supposed him to possess. This I believe entirely disappeared when he was performing his functions; at which time I have been assured he seemed totally regardless of everything but the duty wherein he was engaged.

Few persons took so much interest in my

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II.pp.5-6.

writings, which may partly have arisen from the almost entire coincidence in our opinions and ways of thinking upon all momentous subjects; the Catholic question alone excepted.¹

Reviewing the literary works of one's friends is usually a thankless job, or one's reviewing is at best not fully appreciated. Henry Milman, who followed Heber in reputation at Brasenose College and went on to become Professor of Poetry at Oxford University and a leading author, before being appointed as Dean of St. Paul's, London, had published his poem, "The Fall of Jerusalem". After reviewing it, Heber, in describing his work to Wilmot, commented:

The first (article) was on a very fine poem of Milman's, 'The Fall of Jerusalem', which, as being almost exclusively laudatory, I found difficult, and did not well satisfy myself.²

However, in a later letter to Charlotte Dod from Oxford, where Reginald had been to hear the performance of the oratorio, "Palestine", he wrote of Milman's reaction to the review:

I am, however, sorry to tell you that he is not at all pleased with the review of his poem in the "Quarterly", so that it will be as well, if it is not too late, not to mention to anybody that I am the author. I had no communication with him myself on the subject, but this is what I hear from others. I certainly, if he asks me, shall not deny or conceal it, since I do not think I have given him any cause for dissatisfaction. But poets - I know but too well, from the recollection of my own feelings

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- 1 Southey, Charles C. - Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey. Vol. VI. pp. 108-110.
 - 2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol. II. p. 5.

when I was also a poet - are not easily contented with qualified praise, though such praise is precisely that by which a critic does them most good in the opinion of the world at large.¹

Reginald's desire to avoid any discussion over this review was undoubtedly strengthened by Milman's interest and co-operation in the preparation of Heber's collection of hymns which was then being made.

In 1817, some informed men in England feared that Russia might be considering embarking on a scheme of conquest in the same way that Napoleon had done. This Heber considered an improbability and this opinion led to his article on "A Sketch of the Military and Political Power of Russia, in 1817", which appeared in the next April issue of the "Quarterly Review". The following year he completed a review of "Hunt's Translation of Tasso". In 1820, he was engaged in finishing an article on Rennell's "Illustration of the Anabasis". He declared that he found it a very heavy subject, and was sorry that he had undertaken it; but, having accomplished so much, he considered it absurd to give it up.

Late in the previous year Reginald Heber had been invited by Ogle and Duncan, booksellers, to prepare a biography and critical essay on the writings of Bishop Jeremy Taylor, for a new uniform edition which was to be prepared. This was the first time the complete edition of his works had been attempted.

1 Smith, George - Bishop Heber. pp.70-71.

This task of research and writing Heber enjoyed, but when he wrote to the Lord Bishop of Oxford in April, 1822, at the completion of the biography, he confessed it was "launched on the sea of public opinion - with considerable fear and trepidation" on his part.

There is a time, I believe, when every author is heartily weary of his own works, and not sorry to get rid of them on almost any terms. This has been, for some time back, the case with me, so that I feel much relieved by my present emancipation, though uncertain what reception my poor infant may meet with in the world.¹

His work has stood the test of time and Heber's edition of Taylor, revised in 1854 by Eden, is still considered a standard work on this great divine. Commenting on this biographical effort of Reginald, one of his early biographers stated that the appearance of the Taylor edition,

made known to the world how well the interval had been spent in maturing his great knowledge by reflection, and chastening a style, in his former work, perhaps, somewhat redundant, by a sound judgment and more finished taste.²

It was claimed that Heber's "Life of Bishop Taylor" was unquestionably the most chaste and the most elaborate of his prose productions; and it contains passages of unrivalled beauty, expressed with the utmost force, eloquence and precision.³

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol. II. p. 57.

2 Bonner, George - Memoir of the Life of Rgt. Rev. Reginald Heber, D.D. p. 26.

3 Taylor, Thomas - Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Right Reverend Reginald Heber, p. 490.

Reginald Heber had much in common with Jeremy Taylor - a poetical temperament, a hatred of intolerance, great simplicity, an abomination of every sordid and narrowminded feeling, an earnest desire to make religion practical instead of speculative, and faith, vivid in proportion to the vigour of high imagination. This study of the life of the noted Bishop made a contribution to the spirit of Heber.

The last article which he contributed to the "Quarterly" was a review of Byron's dramatic poems which appeared in 1822. He had for years followed the career of young Lord Byron, who was a cousin of his politically minded friend, Robert Wilmot. As early as 1812, in a letter to Wilmot he wrote,

You have, I conclude, got acquainted with your cousin, Lord Byron, of whom, I entreat you by your father's beard and your own right hand, to send me a full and impartial account.¹

While he differed strongly with Byron's political interests, he read his poetic offerings with great interest and keen criticism. Of his review, he felt that while he had found a reasonable quantity of fault, he had done him no injustice. The reaction to his article was, he confided to Charlotte Dod, not as he anticipated:

My review of Lord Byron has been variously spoken of. I do not think the people whom I should most wish to please are satisfied with it. They say (as my dear sister did) that I am too favourable to him, and speak too mildly of infidelity and atheism. I did not mean to do so,

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I.p.377.

and I will own I have been greatly mortified at finding this opinion prevalent. Nor is my mortification diminished by finding the soi-disant 'liberals' very complaisant in their expressions concerning it. Heaven grant that this disappointment may make me more cautious hereafter, as well as more indifferent to the opinions of mankind! I certainly wished to conciliate the half-infidels, but I had not the smallest thought of giving ground to them; nor do I think I have. Yet I find the unknown author is suspected of having done so.¹

We see here Heber's developing spirit of conciliation clearly stated. Even in his literary sideline, he found a way to use his persuasive pen on behalf of the Church and its programme.

This was definitely his aim in preparing a review of the "Black Book", an offering from a radical press which severely criticised Church and State for corruption in high places. The King, parliament, the judges, the lawyers, the landed aristocracy, and the leading statesmen were all held up to popular indignation in the proscribed list of placemen and pensioners. However, it was the clergy who were held as "the most iniquitous of the different classes opposed to the welfare of the community". The scathing attack on the Church and State was a challenge to Heber. With the help of his friends, Wynn, Vansittart, and others, he obtained a great mass of official returns of income tax, tithes, etc., with which to prepare his elaborate defence. This able article was almost finished but had to be laid aside when the Church chose Heber as its gallant

1 Smith, George - Bishop Heber, pp.100-101.

and talented Bishop for India. His treatment on ecclesiastical revenues, although unpublished in the "Quarterly", was finally published as a part of his biography.

For several years, Gifford, the able editor of the "Quarterly Review", had suffered periods of ill-health. As a result, the question of a successor was raised in the minds of some. In the autumn of 1822, Reginald Heber was considered for Gifford's associate and probable successor, but he declined it, as he had done on a previous occasion. He felt that the position should not be held by a clergyman and favoured J.G. Lockhart, Scott's son-in-law, who ultimately became the editor, after S.T. Coleridge had held the office for a short time. Heber's decision not to assume this responsibility was wise, for a far greater one was in the offing. However, his editorship, had he consented to accept, would have given the "Quarterly Review" a far different reputation from the one it gained under Lockhart's sway, when a book noticed in the "Quarterly" was said to be, "Hanged, drawn and Quarterly-reviewed."

Another work of interest which had to be left unfinished was his "Dictionary of the Bible", which he had begun early in his parish ministry, in 1812. In the beginning, it was his main study project until his writing for the "Quarterly" claimed a larger amount of his time; but during the whole time he was at Hodnet, he worked at it with varying degrees of intensity. It provided an intellectual diversion from his sermonic and literary efforts; and might well, if he had lived

a normal length of life, have been his magnum opus of scholarship.

In the collection of Heber writings, one finds that he also started several poems, of an ambitious scope, which were never completed. The King Arthur legends intrigued the Muse of Reginald as it did better known poets. Mrs. Heber places the beginning of his "Morte D'Arthur" as sometime in 1812. However, in his letter to Thornton of the 8th October, 1810, he wrote that he was

making progress in a poem, which, if it does not miscarry, will be longer than any of my preceding. This is of course at present a secret even from my own family.¹

This I believe is the proper date for the start of this poem.

He refers to it in a letter of the 10th June, 1812, in this way:

King Arthur has made pretty considerable progress in another canto, which is to be much fuller of moralization than the former.²

At the end of the same year he mentioned that he had, at different times during the summer, been projecting a half religious, half descriptive poem, to be called "The Desert". This was to give an account of the wilder features of nature, as displayed in different latitudes. No evidence exists that this poem was ever started. On the basis of the previous two points of identification, plus this much later reference,

¹Thornton Collection - MS. Letter No. 43.

² Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol. I. p. 376.

I had projected at an earlier period of my career as a student in divinity, a sort of epic poem on the subject of Arthur; and have once since, meditated a something, I know not how to call it, on the same subject with Montgomery's 'world before the flood',¹

all other possibilities are eliminated, and the "Morte D'Arthur" must have been started in 1810. The only other possibility is that the early reference to a secret poem refers to one which has been lost, and this seems extremely unlikely.

Heber's "World Before the Flood" exists only in a partially completed state. A third long poem which was never completed was "The Masque of Gwendolen". With the consideration of this poem we see another facet of his literary skill and personality which was expressed during the Hodnet years. Heber was able and willing, more than that, he was eager to indulge in the lighter vein. We have seen how at Oxford he was not innocent of the satirical effusions that we expect from the undergraduate with a taste for verse, and now in his maturer years, he could be persuaded to lend his pen to the uses of social enjoyment. Among these "Masques" and efforts, suggested undoubtedly by friends and festivities rather than by the Muse, we may perhaps place "The Masque of Gwendolen", as the most conspicuous. As one reads his "Blue-Beard", a serio-comic oriental romance, one can visualize it presented in an impromptu entertainment on a winter's evening in the Heber rectory. It was such an evening that Maria Leycester found so delightful an experience.

1 Ibid. p.505.

In his Bluebeard, and his early "Whippiad", he reveals a delightful gift for irresponsible parody, which more than anything else he has written gives us an impression of the charm of his personality.¹

The Ballad, "O, Captain of the Moorish hold", and "Sympathy" were also shorter poems which first enlivened the fire-side groups; and they are offered by Mrs. Heber as illustrations of his talent for extempore versification.

Something of this same happy spirit was revealed by Reginald Heber in his poems entitled, "Bow-Meeting Song". There are four with this title in "The Poetical Works of Reginald Heber". The Heber letters provide very few references to the bow-meetings, and these mention, directly or indirectly, the summers of 1818, 1820 and 1821. The bow-meetings were an exciting and colourful feature of English social and sporting life during Heber's life-time. Interest in archery as a sport had been revived in the last decade of the eighteenth century, and a large share of credit for this must be accorded to the Prince of Wales (later His Majesty George IV). During the war years, interest in this recreational activity of the gentry and nobility had been greatly diminished, but it revived and flourished with the coming of peace in 1815. One of the earliest archery societies to be formed during the wave of popularity which swept the country, following the establishment

1 Brasenose Quatercentenary Monographs, Vol.II.Section **XIV**,
p.10.

of the Royal Toxophilite Society, was the Royal British Bowmen. This society was formed by Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, in whose park of Wynnstay, Denbighshire, the Royal British Bowmen held their meetings.

His Majesty George the Fourth, when Prince of Wales not only condescended to become their patron, but presented them with several beautiful prizes.¹

The Society included nearly all the leading families of North Wales. Just when Reginald Heber first came to be an attendant upon and a possible participant in these archery matches, which were held at Wynnstay, is not known. None of the Hebers are listed on an early membership roll of the R.B.B. which does contain the name of "Master Wynn" (C.W.W.Wynn). A later listing might show Reginald's name as a member, but evidence points to the thought that 'the shining shafts' which Reginald may have loosened on the greensward were those of a poet honouring the custom, rather than of a participant in the contest. We know that one of his Bow meeting songs, "By yon castle wall", was sung at Hawarden Castle, in Flintshire, the seat of Sir Stephen Glynne.² Another of these songs, which is not found in any of the Heber printed works, was written in a notebook by Harriett Mytton Pigott (1779-1846), a member of an old Shropshire family.³ Also copied in the notebook is his song,

1 Hansard, George Agar - Book of Archery, p.206.

2 Catherine, the eldest daughter of Sir Stephen Glynne, was married in 1839 to William Ewart Gladstone, M.P.

3 Vide Appendix 8, Unpublished Bow Meeting Song. MS.Pigott 23480, p.12., Bodleian Library, Oxford University.

"Merry archers come with me", and in a pencilled notation by his name as author is the phrase, "Poet Laureate to the Ancient British Archers".

Like the greater and lesser poets of "The Romantic Revival", which compassed the life of Heber, he shared new interest in nature and the elemental simplicities of life. An ordinary sunset, a walk over the hills, a cluster of spring flowers, the rain-bearing west wind, the song of the nightingale, were simple subjects which inspired a Wordsworth, a Coleridge, a Shelley and a Keats to supreme achievement. Reginald's travel journal furnishes abundant illustration of his keen observation of nature in all its beauty, but it was the countryside of his parish and the surrounding area which moved his Muse into poetic expression. In particular, his journeys on horseback, into Wales, after his appointment as a Prebendary of St. Asaph, afforded him both the stimulus and the opportunity. "The Spring Journey", "Carol for May-day", "Happiness" and "To a Welsh Air" are all light delightful lyrics to the beauty of nature which owe their inspiration to these journeys. The summer of 1819 saw the Hebers at Seacombe, near Liverpool, where Mrs. Heber had been sent for the recovery of her health. Reginald, having more leisure for poetical composition, wrote "The Outward-Bound Ship" and "The Grand Swell" during these weeks. "The Rising of the Sun" is a stirring call to the hunt as dawn breaks, reminiscent of the mornings when he accompanied his father and brother into the field. These and others of

his shorter poems breathe a spirit of an abiding love of nature in all its changing manifestations, and deserve a modern reading.¹ Although chronologically out of place in this chapter, mention should be made of the two poems, "Lines Addressed to Mrs. Heber" and "An Evening Walk in Bengal", which were written by Reginald in India. The first one was quoted by Thackeray with warm appreciation; and, of the second, it has been said that of all his poems, it is the most touching and beautiful.

Heber was not only busy in writing material which was intended for publication, or for his own pleasure; but he was always more or less consulted by a wide circle of friends and acquaintances on points of criticism, advice as to books, and help in the study of theology. In his private communications he was no less careful in his method and polished in his manner than in writing for publication. When he was asked for literary criticism, he gave it freely and sincerely. The Rev. George Wilkins submitted his manuscript for the "History of the Siege of Jerusalem" to the young rector, and he held it until he could satisfy himself concerning the historical background before making his study of it and then he replied:

You will observe that, according to my promise, I have read over your history with a very attentive and a tolerably severe eye; and I can honestly assure you that I have not knowingly passed over any material fault or

1 Heber. Reginald - Poetical Works.

incorrectness either of fact or style.

The analysis concluded with the statement:

I have said all the evil of your book which I could; I must now, in justice, say something in its favour. It is pious, rational, and pleasingly written; when you have been warmed with your subject you have shown very considerable powers of description; and when it shall have received your further corrections, I have no doubt of its being both a useful, and popular volume.¹

A second reading and correction followed; and in later acknowledging safe arrival of the book-gift from Wilkins, Heber expressed the hope that,

notwithstanding our distance and occupations, we may still, at no distant time, contrive a meeting, and thus put an end to the solecism of a friendship carried on without personal acquaintance.

This courtesy and consideration was typical of Heber's graciousness of character.

Charlotte Dod once wrote asking Reginald's opinion concerning "The Force of Truth" by the Rev. Thomas Scott; and his reply, in which he weighed the pros and cons of the exposition, developed into a treatise of more than seven thousand words. And this polemic was for the eyes of a single friend!

One young poet and writer whom he encouraged is today better remembered for her writings than is the Rector of Hodnet, with the exception of his hymns. He met Felicia Dorothea Hemans

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I.pp.402-3.

in the spring of 1820. Mrs. Hemans, a young wife engaged in keeping her family cared for and aspiring to become a writer, met Reginald Heber through his wife's family with whom she was well acquainted. He was the first eminent literary character with whom she had ever had the opportunity to be well acquainted. It proved to be an exciting experience for her and a letter of hers to a friend on this occasion describes her enjoyment and provides, at the same time, an interesting view of Reginald Heber:

I am more delighted with Mr. Heber than I can possibly tell you; his conversation is quite rich with anecdote, and every subject on which he speaks has been, you would imagine, the sole study of his life. In short, his society has made much the same sort of impression on my mind, that the first perusal of *Ivanhoe* did; and was something so perfectly new to me, that I can hardly talk of anything else. I had a very long conversation with him on the subject of the poem, (*Superstition and Revelation*) which he read aloud, and commented upon as he proceeded. His manner was so entirely that of a friend, that I felt perfectly at ease, and did not hesitate to express all my own ideas and opinions on the subject, even where they did not exactly coincide with his own.¹

He gave her every encouragement with this and subsequent poems which she offered for his consideration, furnished her with suggestions, and suggested sources for required information as she worked. Writing to Wilmot in London, 14th June, 1821, he noted:

1 Hemans, Felicia Dorothea - The Works of Mrs. Hemans,
Vol. I. pp. 38-9.

Mrs Hemans has written a tragedy on the subject of the Sicilian Vespers, of which it is saying too little to praise it as better than any which, for several years back, has been brought to the stage, and which, I think, would really make a popular acting play. It is by far the best of her productions.¹

Reginald Heber was a better than average critic, but even a critic can be wrong. The play, "The Vespers of Palermo", of which he and others had such high hopes, opened on 12th December, 1823, in the Covent Garden Theatre, London, and ran for one performance only. It closed that night.²

The name of Reginald Heber, one hundred and twentyfive years after his death, is best known in England, and America and throughout the world, wherever their church representatives have established missions, for several of his great hymns. Almost all his religious poetry was composed to be sung in his parish church at Hodnet. In religious poetry he was partially influenced by Cowper. It was William Cowper (1731-1800) who introduced the theological element into English poetry, along with other elements - the utmost simplicity and unaffected naturalness of style, and a true and beautiful love of nature. He put down just what he saw with the utmost simplicity - with what one would call today a scientific simplicity. In this

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II.p.45.

2 "The Vespers of Palermo" was revived later to play in Edinburgh, which proved to have a more discriminating audience, as it was well received.

Cowper was ahead of his time. We have now become used to this species of scientific accuracy in poetic description, and we resent the loose and inaccurate generalities. He was the true author of this change, and was the forerunner of Wordsworth. Today, Cowper is best known for his hymns.

In his survey of "Religious Poetry" for the period of 1800 to 1833 in England, Canon Overton states "the age was singularly weak in what may be termed religious poetry".¹ Overton develops the thesis that, while there was no religious poetry of any real mark, it was the great poets of the day - Scott, S.T.Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Southey - who tended, more than any other writers, to affect men's attitudes towards religion, and they did it through their prose more than by their poetry. There was no religious poetry of any real distinction, "with the exception of hymns for public worship".¹ It was at this point that Reginald Heber made his significant contribution and established his name for posterity. Overton tends to minimize Heber's contribution through his hymns because he was still within the influence of the aura of Heber's personality. The passing of half a century more has given us a more objective view than Overton had in which to establish his renown as a hymn writer.

Reginald Heber wrote his hymns with one purpose in mind -

1 Overton, John - The English Church in the Nineteenth Century, pp.203-218.

they were to be sung in the services of worship of his Church - the church at Hodnet and in the Established Church. His poetical interpretation of the spiritual needs, which he and the members of his parish shared, have a universal quality which have made them loved by many denominations of the Christian Church.

The poetic quality of Heber's hymns is universally conceded. A few of them occupy a high rank as sacred lyrics.¹

The development of his collection of hymns,² which was not published until after his death, is an interesting story. It began with a problem.

The first mention of it was made in the same letter to Thornton, 15th February, 1809, in which Reginald revealed his interest in the formation of the "Quarterly Review". Like dual strands of colour in the drab routine of parish details, one finds Heber's interest in reviewing and hymn writing interwoven throughout the years he spent at Hodnet. The nature of Heber's problem is first disclosed,

My Psalm-singing continues bad. Can you tell me where I can purchase Cowper's Olney hymns, with the music, and in a smaller size without the music, to put in the seats? Some of them I admire much, and any novelty is likely to become a favourite, and draw more people to join in the singing. What book is used at Lock? If I could get one or two I should like to select from them.³

1 Hatfield, Edwin - The Poets of the Church, p.308.

2 Heber, Reginald - Hymns Written and Adapted to the Weekly Church Service of the Year.

3 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I.p.352.

Poor psalm singing by the congregation was a common complaint in the Established Church at that time, not only in the rural churches but in the cities as well. In London, innovations of choirs and organs were being made to make the services more interesting to the listener. This doleful condition of church music, however, did not exist in the churches of the Dissenters, especially among the followers of John and Charles Wesley. These groups found and shared a deep, abiding, joyful enthusiasm in their congregational hymn singing. Heber recognized that their use was the principal engine of popularity with the Dissenters and with the "Evangelicals".

Some of the "Evangelical" ministers had gone so far as to make collections of hymns which they found acceptable for use in their services along with the authorized version of the Psalms. The latter part of the eighteenth century witnessed several such collections. M.Madan's book¹ in 1760 drew largely upon George Whitefield's alteration of hymns by Watts and Wesley. The literary standard was high, and the tone throughout was bright and joyous. This formed the basis for the Rev.Conyer's Collection,² to which he added a few originals from Newton and Cowper. It was an advance over the former, and gave greater prominence to the Christian Seasons. De Courcy and Toplady

1 Madan, M. - A Collection of Psalms and Hymns, Extracted from Various Authors, and published by the Reverend Mr.Madan.....

2 Conyers, R. - A Collection of Psalms and Hymns from Various Authors: for the use of the Serious and Devout Christians of every Denomination.

carried on the widening of the area of hymn selection. Between 1776 and 1787 there was increased activity, with seven collections compiled.

Although this list shows that there was increased activity in the Church, and a fresher life, yet the hymn-books named above brought little of value to the common store of hymnody, and added not a single name of importance to the list of Church of England hymn-writers.¹

"The Olney Hymns" by John Newton and William Cowper was published in this period (1779). It exercised a powerful influence upon the collections of the next seventy years.

The first twenty years of the new century (1800-1820) were marked by an increased interest in the singing of hymns, rather than the psalm versions of Tate and Brady, which were authorized for use in the Church. The number of hymn-books published during these years (Julian lists forty-two) is an indication of this widespread interest throughout the Established Church. Many of these were designed for use in a particular church. Not until 1820 did one of these collections receive an official approval by the Church.² The Archbishop of York took this action as the result of a storm of opposition from the congregation of St. Paul's, Sheffield, about using the hymn-book advanced by their rector, the Rev. T. Cotterill.

1 Julian, J. - Dictionary of Hymnology, p.333.

2 Cotterill, T. - Selection of Psalms and Hymns for Public Worship.

Presumably, John Thornton sent Reginald the requested hymnbooks and he began his study of that form of religious poetry. We know, regrettably, too few facts about the composing of Heber's hymns. Probably his first one was written soon after mid-February, 1809, with several being accomplished during that summer. At least, by 10th January, 1810, he could write:

The religious poems are at a stand-still. In summer when I walked in green fields, or sat under shady trees, such fancies often came into my head.¹

Several of his hymns were published in the "Christian Observer" in 1811 and 1812. Signed with the initials, "D.R." (the end letters of his name) the prefatory notice explained his purpose, stating that they were to be used in his own congregation, and that he solicited criticism from the readers.

The following hymns are part of an intended series, appropriate to the Sundays and principal holydays of the year, connected in some degree with their particular Collects and Gospels, and designed to be sung between the Nicene Creed and the Sermon.²

Of the eight hymns printed in the "Christian Observer" for November, 1811, and of the four which appeared in the following year, two have survived in constant use: "Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning" and "By cool Siloam's Shady Fountain".

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I.p.362.

2 Christian Observer - Vol.X., Nov.1811, pp.630, 697.

These and other hymns which Heber wrote were composed for particular tunes. He had an acute and accurate ear for a melody and he possessed a remarkable talent for adapting poetry to any tune which he chanced to hear. Welsh and Scottish airs were favourites with him. "Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning", one of his earliest compositions, remains today as one of the most popular of his offerings. Yet Julian states:

Few hymns of merit have troubled compilers more than this. Some have held that its use involved the worshipping of a star, whilst others have been offended with its metre as being too suggestive of a solemn dance.¹

Reginald Heber wrote this hymn to be sung to the well known and beautiful Scottish air, "Wandering Willie".

Smith, on the basis of "'Heber's MS. hymnbook with music', which was in the possession of the rector of Hodnet in 1895", supplied the list, which shows the original airs to which some of Reginald's hymns were first written:

| <u>Hymn</u> | <u>Original Air</u> |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Brightest and best..... | Wandering Willie |
| The God of Glory walks His round..... | Banks of Doon |
| Forth from the dark..... | Rousseau's Dream |
| O Saviour, is Thy promise fled..... | Mary's Dream |
| O God, that madest earth and heaven.. | Gramachree |
| When on her Maker's bosom..... | John Anderson, my Jo |
| Sit Thou on My right hand..... | Saw ye my Father |
| I praised the earth..... | Haydn |
| O, most merciful..... | Sicilian Mariners |
| The world is grown old..... | Logie o' Buchan |
| Weep not, O Mother..... | Adeste Fidelis |
| Thou art gone to the grave..... | Auld Robin Gray. ² |

1 Julian, J. - Dictionary of Hymnology, p.182.

2 Smith, George - Bishop Heber, p.92.

Later in his ministry, however, Reginald wrote, "I have a promise of many fine old tunes, not Scotch as I once dreamed of having, but genuine Church melodies." The accomplished hymnologist, Canon W.H.Havergal, assisted him at this point. He had come to recognize the importance of the right tune for the poem. And, in this regard, is the conjunction most fortunate in the present tune and words in his hymn, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty".

(This) is the finest hymn of adoration in the language. It is set to Nicea, one of Dyke's finest tunes. It thus becomes in its twofold aspect a positive standard of the perfected hymn-tune in time, pitch, movement, range, and harmony.¹

It is a sacred song which has never been surpassed. Alfred, Lord Tennyson, has designated this as "The World's greatest hymn."

Of the hymns by which Reginald Heber is best remembered today, "From Greenland's Icy Mountains" is one of the most popular in common usage. This is the only one of his hymns of which we have the story of its inspiration and creation. By a strange paradox, it also has furnished an undying myth. A royal letter was granted in 1819 authorizing collections in every Church and Chapel of Britain in furtherance of the Eastern missionary activities of the Society for the Propagation

1 Breed, David R. - History and Use of Hymns and Hymn Tunes, p.314.

of the Gospel. This had also been done by Cromwell in 1649, when creating the first English Missionary Society under the title of "Corporation for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England". The offering was to be received on Whit Sunday. The Dean of St.Asaph, also Vicar of Wrexham, and father-in-law to Heber, arranged to preach the missionary sermon on the appointed day, while he engaged Reginald to deliver the first of a series of Sunday evening sermons in that church. It was in Wrexham, on the day prior to the missionary sermon, that this well loved hymn was written by the rector of Hodnet. We are indebted to Mr Thomas Edgeworth for the details of its creation:

In the course of the Saturday previous, the Dean and his son-in-law being together in the Vicarage, the former requested Heber to write 'something for them to sing in the morning'; and he retired for that purpose from the table where the Dean and a few friends were sitting, to a distant part of the room. In a short time the Dean enquired, 'What have you written?' Heber having then composed the first three verses, read them over. 'There, there, that will do very well', said the Dean. 'No, no, the sense is not complete', replied Heber. Accordingly he added the fourth verse, and the Dean being inexorable to his repeated request of 'Let me add another, O let me add another', thus completed the hymn.....which has since become so celebrated. It was sung the next morning in Wrexham Church, the first time.¹

The original MS. was subsequently secured from the printer's file by Dr.Raffles, of Liverpool, and was reproduced in

1 Julian, J. - Dictionary of Hymnology, p.399.

facsimile. The flyleaf of the facsimile contained an account of its origin as related by Thomas Edworth, a solicitor of Wrexham. His account agrees with that given by Mrs. Heber in the "Life", but it discloses more of the details. The myth which persists concerns the second line of the second stanza:

"Blow soft o'er Java's isle." -

This is the way it appeared in the Heber "Hymns" when it was published in 1827. The facsimile of the Wrexham MS. reads, "Blow Soft o'er Ceylon's isle". The reason for the change and the exact date of it are unknown. A mistake which many, unwittingly, have made, without knowing the circumstances of its writing, has been to assume that the hymn was written by Heber after he became Bishop of Calcutta and had taken up residence in India. Actually it was written three years before Heber had the first intimation that he was being considered for a bishopric. The same error accounts for the undying myth of the substitution of "Java" for "Ceylon" - that Heber was disappointed in Ceylon's spicy breezes when he visited the island and so changed the name. Arguments over this change, through the years, have blown soft and hard, and as recently as 1950, a spirited exchange of letters took place in the columns of the Sunday Times (London). In "The Cornhill" for Autumn, 1950,¹ Mr. Thomas Driberg advances the theory that

1 The Cornhill Magazine, No.984, 1950. p.

Heber's widow was obeying his suggestion in removing the blot from Ceylon, whose people he had learned to respect. A seemingly reasonable theory, it crumbles, as do all similar theories based on the supposition that Heber made the change after leaving England and visiting India and Ceylon, when faced with MS.25,704 AB of the MS. Section, British Museum.¹ This MS. consists of two paper bound copy books in which Reginald Heber had copied his selection of hymns which he had made for his projected hymn book. In this copy of the missionary hymn, the phrase used is "Java's isle". Unfortunately, these notebooks are not dated, so the clinching argument is not quite complete. The handwriting is identifiable as Heber's and compares favourably with his letters of the period prior to 1823. In his letter to Milman describing his hymnbook, dated 28th Dec.1821, Heber wrote:

In order that you may understand the nature of that plan more clearly, I have sent you the first volume of my collection, in which, as you will observe, I have marked the author's name or initials to all, whether original or collected, of which the author is known.²

While this citation mentions only the first volume, and the missionary hymn is written in the second copybook, it appears that Heber at some time after this letter and before sailing from England, gave the second one to Milman. There is no

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- 1 MS.25,704 AB, British Museum, was presented by the Very Rev. Dean of St. Paul's, H.H. Milman, 24th June, 1864.
 - 2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol. **II**. p.50.

evidence to substantiate a possible theory that Heber worked on his hymns while in India. This notebook, given by Heber to Milman, containing the name "Java" instead of "Ceylon" seems the best evidence that Heber made the change long before he reached Ceylon. This change was probably made merely because of scansional difficulty.

"From Greenland's Icy Mountains" has been hailed as "the most inspiring of all missionary lyrics". It marked a new departure in hymnody, a trumpet call such as the Church had never before heard in sacred song; written in a new metre, and expressed in the choicest poetic terms. The tune at first used was a fine but an incongruous one: "Twas when the seas were roaring", from "The Beggars' Opera". The tune which is now most happily associated with it is by Lowell Mason, an American composer and organist. This one hymn, written in a flash of inspiration, has done more to immortalize the name of Reginald Heber than anything else from his pen.

As the number of his hymns increased each year, Reginald Heber began to think seriously of compiling his own hymn book and, as part of the preparation, he studied other collections with that thought in his mind. Some of the studied hymns "shocked and scandalized" him as being "detestable, not in taste only, but to the highest degree, in doctrine and sentiment". Some ministers had considered that sufficient reason for excluding from the Church service all but the authorized versions

of the Psalms. Heber felt that such reasoning was fallacious. Therefore, he sought official approval for his contemplated collection. We do not know whether he knew of the Cotterill difficulty at St. Paul's, Sheffield, or not. Probably he did know and that strengthened his desire for the necessary approval. To this end he addressed his appeal for advice on the 4th October, 1820, to the Lord Bishop of London. The case for the use of hymns in the Church, according to Heber was based upon three points:

1. Popularity with people. "The fondness of the lower classes for these compositions is well known."
2. Ancient Usage. "The whole stress of precedent in the Christian Church....authorizes and encourages the use of hymns as well as of the Psalms of David."
3. Presence in Church Liturgy. "The compilers of our liturgy appear to have been by no means unfavourable to the use of hymns."

Hoping for a licence or authority similar to that which had been given to Tate and Brady he continued:

I have the vanity to think that even my own compositions are not inferior in poetical merit to those of Tate; and my collection will contain some from our older poets,¹.... There are a few also which I have extracted from the popular collections usually circulated, which, though I have not been able to learn their authors,² possess considerable merit and

1 Addison, Cowper, Drummond, Dryden, Pope, Bishops Ken and Taylor.

2 In the 1827 edition of Heber's Hymns, 5 are marked "Anon" and "Hark! the Herald Angels sing" had no name at all, raising the question as to whether Heber knew that this was credited in part to Charles Wesley.

much popularity, and are entirely free from objectionable expressions. Nor am I without hope, if encouraged by your Lordship to proceed of obtaining the powerful assistance of my friends Scott and Southey.¹ By far the greater part, however, of my present collection are of my own making.....etc.²

The Bishop's reply indicated that the time was not right for obtaining the sanction of authority at that time (always a safe reply!). He wished to give the matter fuller consideration. He found the hymns good. "The language is simple - as in this sort of poetry it ought to be, and generally pure, which I think equally essential."³ He also indicated that it might be well that the book be published first to gain general approbation which might prepare the way for further measures.

While Heber failed to get the powerful assistance he had expected from his friends, Walter Scott and Robert Southey, he gained an enthusiastic contributor in the Rev. Henry H. Milman. Milman, who had followed in Heber's strides at Brasenose, had been elected to be professor of poetry at Oxford University in 1821. The offerings which he sent, Reginald considered "a most powerful reinforcement". Of the twelve Milman hymns which were placed in the collection the great Palm Sunday Hymn, "Ride on! ride on in majesty", is best known today. As late as December, 1822, Heber writing to Milman recounted the encouragement given to him, a short time before, by the Bishop of

1 Scott contributed "Dies Irae". Southey is not represented.

2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II.pp.23-9.

3 Ibid. p.29.

London on the project of the hymn book. He acknowledged that,

His taste is exquisite, though, where my own lines were concerned, I thought him sometimes too severe and uncompromisingly a lover of simplicity.¹

It was planned to discuss the hymn book at the next meeting of Heber with Milman early in the new year. However, this was as far as Reginald carried the project, for a challenging invitation was to dispel the peace and calm of the country rectory and open up distant vistas of service for him, in a then unsuspected direction.

The long projected hymn book was the first one of Heber's works which his wife published after his death. "Hymns written and adapted to the Weekly Church Service of the Year", by the Right Rev. Reginald Heber, D.D., was graced with a dedication to His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury. The reception it received from the clergy and laity of the Church necessitated several editions.² Of the collection of ninety-nine hymns, Heber had written fifty-seven; Milman, twelve; and twenty-nine had been taken from other sources.³

The reviewer of Heber's "Hymns" in the "Quarterly Review" July, 1828, treated it in connection with the apparent need of the Established Church for amendment and regulation of its Psalmody, pointing out that the Church of Scotland was then

1 Ibid. p.93.

2 The records of John Murray, publishers, London, ^{show} that in the nineteenth century Heber's "Hymns" received 13 printings for a total of 17,476.

3 Only one hymn, "God moves in a mysterious way", by Cowper, was borrowed from the Olney hymns which John Thornton had been asked to supply.

employed in a similar undertaking, and that in the year before, the American Episcopal Church had put forth a selection of hymns for the use of its congregation. The writer pointed out that if Heber's collection did not fulfil the need for a new Church Hymn Collection, and he clearly indicated that it didn't, he recognized with others, that it would,

furnish the richest and amplest contributions to such a purpose. If ever the design be accomplished, the Church of England will owe its advancement more to Bishop Heber than to any other individual;¹

Reginald Heber's plan was to connect the psalm or hymn with the liturgy of the day. There could be no question of its propriety on the great fasts and festivals of the Church, where one tone and character pervaded the whole service, and some one great event of Christianity was perpetually impressed upon the congregation. Where the service was without any particular character, and pointed at no particular incident in the Christian history, the framing of the hymn upon some allusion to the gospel of the day was also approved.

In this article, the comment is made,

But in some cases we must acknowledge that the Bishop has been tempted, by his own limitation, into writing a short poem on the subject of the gospel rather than merely taken a hint for an address to the Almighty, which we conceive to be the great characteristic of an hymn.²

1 Quarterly Review. Vol.38, No.LXXV. July 1828. p.41.

2 Ibid. p.43.

Some of Heber's efforts were merely religious poetry and not hymns. This limitation of a kind was recognized by Julian in his evaluation of Heber's work:

The lyric spirit of Scott and Byron passed into our hymns in Heber's verse; imparting fuller rhythm to the older measures, as illustrated by "The Son of God goes forth to war", pressing into sacred service the freer rhythms of contemporary poetry (e.g. "Brightest and best of the sons of morning"); and aiming at consistent grace of literary expression. Their beauties and faults spring from this 'modern' spirit. They have not the scriptural strength of our best early hymns, nor the dogmatic force of the best Latin ones. They are too flowing and florid, and the conditions of hymn composition are not sufficiently understood. But as pure and graceful devotional poetry, always true and reverent, they are an unfailing pleasure.¹

Time is the inexorable test. These hymns which enriched the worship of the Church of England, were taken into other collections of hymns and soon found their way across the seas to America, and to distant lands wherever missionaries from these two countries went.² Near the end of the century it was pointed out in honour to Heber's talent that nearly all of his hymns were in use. The passing of fifty more years has seen a further toll taken, as changes in hymnology and hymn styles have taken place. Now, almost a century and a quarter after the publication of Heber's "Hymns", we have a right to feel objective in evaluating them. His lesser hymns have fallen by the

1 Julian, J. - Dictionary of Hymnology. p.503.

2 Vide Appendix Nos.9 and 9a, Incidence of Heber Hymns in modern usage in Great Britain and the U.S.A.

wayside of time; those which remain in the hymnbooks of today are the good ones, and, of these, some half dozen shine forth as truly great hymns. "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty", "Brightest and best of the Sons of the morning", "From Greenland's Icy Mountains", "Bread of the world, in mercy broken", "The Son of God goes forth to war", "God that madest Earth and Heaven", and "By cool Siloam's shady rill" are some of the finest gems of English hymnody. In the present day hymnal of Heber's Church there appear eleven of his treasured contributions; "The Church Hymnary" presents eight; and the "New Methodist Hymn Book" lists five. In the United States of America, the popularity of the Heber hymns rests primarily upon six which appear most frequently; although the "Hymnal of the Protestant Episcopal Church" lists nine, and "The Hymnal" (Presbyterian), eight.¹

Reginald Heber, in his secluded country rectory, in a span of fifteen years, carved for himself a modest niche in the Hall of Fame for his age as a critic, poet and hymn-writer. With the exception of "Palestine", he was not successful in his more ambitious poems. While not distinguished by great originality, he possessed an effective facility in adapting the ideas, themes and scenes which he had stored in his retentive memory

1 Dr.H.Augustine Smith, of the faculty of Boston University College of Music, noted hymnologist and conductor of congregational singing, author of "Lyric Religion", states that in Twentieth Century hymn books, twenty-one of Heber's hymns are included.

from his voracious reading.

In his time, he was the leading hymn writer, not only in the Established Church, but in all Britain. He was the finest poet among the legion of hymn writers. Although not among the greatest of English hymn writers, he must be accorded a high place. Some of his religious verse seems destined to be sung in the centuries to come wherever Christians gather to worship the Eternal God. The lively and loveable rector did much to promote the use of excellent hymns in his Church. In the arrangement and plan of his hymnal was the germ of the now familiar practice of welding together sermon, hymns, and the liturgy for the service into an effective, harmonious unity. He ranks as a lesser poet in the Romantic Revival of the early nineteenth century. George Saintsbury considers,

There are reasons for thinking that, if Reginald Heber, bishop of Calcutta, had devoted himself entirely to letters, he might have been a poet, if not exactly of first rank, at least very high in the second...he showed a range and variety of talent in verse which should have taken him far.¹

1 Cambridge History of English Literature, Vol.12
Ch.V.p.138.

Chapter Seven

HEBER AS A PREACHER

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Reginald Heber was known to England primarily through his literary efforts but he was also on his way to establishing a reputation for himself as a preacher of fine sermons, before he left for India. That he was creating this reputation at a time when preaching was not highly esteemed by the majority of the ministers in the Church of England, and when the standards were of a different nature than they now are, should not dim the brightness of his reputation. His interest in preaching was an evidence of his religious earnestness and concern for the welfare of his congregation. From the beginning of his ministry at Hodnet, he sought to preach with persuasion to his hearers.

The Church in the early nineteenth century when Heber began his parish preaching was beginning to stir from the spiritual torpor and lethargy which had characterized its life in the previous century, when the Wesleyan revival took place. The young Hodnet rector was one of the minority group within the Church concerned with making its services more meaningful and helpful to the parishioners. To this end he sought to improve the psalmody of the services, and this objective led to his writing hymns to be sung in his church. These hymns not only enriched the worship of Hodnet Church, but also have bestowed a blessing upon all worshippers within the wide Protestant communion.

He also introduced an evening service with a sermon, first held during the summer months, and then scheduled as a regular service for the Church throughout the year. In that time the clergy were not very attentive to the rubrics; but there was one rubric which many of them religiously observed, the one which prescribes a sermon in the morning and makes no allusion to any other sermon. And the quality of the sermons that were preached was not very high. One of the outspoken critics of the preaching then prevalent in the Church was one of its own rectors, the Rev. Sydney Smith, who said,

Preaching has become a byword for long and dull conversation of any kind; and whoever wishes to imply, in any piece of writing, the absence of anything agreeable and inviting, calls it a sermon.¹

On another occasion he wrote with biting satire,

The great object of modern (1802) sermons is to hazard nothing; their characteristic is decent debility; which alike guards their authors from ludicrous errors; and precludes them from striking beauties. Every man of sense, in taking up an English sermon, expects to find it a tedious essay, full of commonplace morality.²

Another sharp critic of the quality of preaching to be heard within the church of England, in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, was one of its loyal High Churchmen of the old type, Robert Southey. He, in praising some sermons by an

1 Holland, Lady - Memoirs of the Rev. Sydney Smith, p.32.

2 Edinburgh Review Vol.I. Oct.1802. p.84.

Evangelical, the Rev. John Miller of Worcester College, Oxford, wrote,

Would to God that such sermons were oftener delivered from our pulpits! Bad sermons are among the many causes which have combined to weaken the Church of England, they keep many from church, they send many to the meeting house.¹

The preaching was emphasised more by the Evangelicals in the Church than by the High Churchmen. Heber, in his preaching, stands between both church parties. In feeling and piety, he inclines towards the Evangelicals; but in his scholarly preparation and mode of delivery, he more closely resembles the best High Churchmen of his day. It could be said of his sermons, as Hannah More remarked of the Reverend Gisborne's sermons, that they were "truly scriptural, without the least tincture of bad taste or enthusiasm."² And that was high praise!

It is difficult to reconstruct a picture of Heber as a preacher, since he left few hints concerning either his work of preparation and delivery or the audience reaction to his efforts. Following his death, his widow, assisted by Sir Robert Harry Inglis, Bart., M.P., a friend of Reginald from the years at Oxford, edited four volumes of Heber's sermons: two covering his parish ministry; one concerning other pulpit presentations made outside his parish; and the fourth volume representing

1 Southey, Charles C. - Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey, Vol. 6, p. 90.

2 Roberts, William - Memoirs of Mrs Hannah More, Vol. 3, p. 341.

his more outstanding sermons preached in India. The sermonic references for this chapter are drawn from the three volumes of sermons preached in England and a number of his sermon manuscripts still remaining in the possession of the Heber-Percy family at Hodnet.

In the study, preparing his sermons, if we may judge from the written ones we have, he appears to have been the same careful student and workman that he was in his literary efforts. We know that he maintained a period of regular daily study.

He was an early riser and, after the devotions were ended, he usually spent seven or eight hours among his books, leaving them at the call of duty.¹

However, we also know that he carried a heavy schedule in his literary writing and in his reading, so that we may assume that only a small proportion of this seven or eight hours was spent directly on his sermons. After learning of Heber's facility in the art of conversation, and his skill in composition as exemplified in his reviews, one would anticipate that the writing of sermons would have been sheer delight for him, but such was not the situation. Early in his ministry, he made the comment in a letter to Thornton,

I have had an infirmity sermon, a long article for a Review, and am now engaged in a charity sermon, besides the weekly drain of sermons² in my own parish, and

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I.p.419.

2 Mrs Heber, in the Life of Reginald Heber, D.D., Vol.I., p.366, substituted the more refined, if less expressive phrase, "demand for sermons", in place of Reginald's "drain of sermons".

the almost daily calls for parochial duty.¹
 Every preacher can sympathise with this feeling, common to a young minister's experience; yet, five years later, when he was in the midst of the preparation of the Bampton Lecture Sermons, he confessed to Wilmot,

I am not so fortunate, certainly, as to taste that which Gibbon calls the luxury of composition; at least it is a luxury which only attends history and poetry, while the streams of polemic Divinity are nothing less than Hippocrene; and till I have rinsed my mouth with Morte Arthur, I hardly look to be my own man again.²

By his own testimony Heber acknowledged that the preparation of sermons was a chore for him. None the less, he instituted and maintained his evening preaching, which necessitated the preparation of two sermons every week, at a time when the commonly accepted practice in the Church was one sermon only, and that not of a high standard. Later in his parish ministry he used again for the evening service some of the sermons which he had formerly preached at a Sunday morning service. But this double usage was not a regular practice for him. A note appears in one of his letters in the twelfth year of his ministry:

This amusement (preparation of his hymn-book) for I cannot call it business, together with the business which I cannot call amusement, of making two sermons weekly, has left me very little time either for my dictionary or the Quarterly.³

¹Thornton Collection - MS.Letter No.43.

² Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D., Vol.I.p.426.

³ Ibid. p. 514.

Heber was a conscientious pastor and preacher, who never was content to rest upon his first efforts. He was the very opposite of the elderly vicar that the Evangelical Minister, the Rev. Thomas Scott, encountered early in his service in the Church. This vicar, opposing young Scott's writing so many new sermons, observed that,

for his own part, when he was ordained, he had written fifty-four or fifty sermons, and they had served him very well ever since; though he had been above fifty years in orders.¹

Though Reginald Heber suffered the agony of mental sweat in his sermon preparation, he never shirked nor slighted the challenge that the pulpit of his Church and the spiritual need of his parish presented to him.

In considering the style of his sermon writing, we move on to more precarious ground. It is difficult to assess the value of a style of writing which is not couched in a familiar form. Our speech and writing today are less formal and more direct in their presentation of the subject matter. The preacher in the mid-twentieth century is more time-conscious and his congregation is even more conscious of time's passing than is the preacher. Heber's literary style in his sermons may well be classed as polished and elegant. Bonner, one of Heber's biographers, and well acquainted with him, has made this comment:

1 Scott, John - Life of the Rev. Thomas Scott, p.125.

Though addressed to a congregation for the most part unlettered, his sermons exhibited no marks of haste; his lamp was not negligently trimmed, because it was in some degree to shine under a bushel.¹

He wasn't guilty of "talking down" to his listeners, but he did alter his style and language on occasion from the usual "flowing and metaphorical" manner in order to be exceedingly direct and plainspoken. Many illustrations may be found in his sermons; two only have been selected. From his sermon on the text, St. James i. 26, (If any man among you seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain), this passage is quoted:

But where, on the other hand, the conversation is lying - flattering - abusive - slanderous, indecent, or blasphemous, it is but vain to flatter ourselves, that the heart within is honest, or pure, or merciful or holy. A man who really fears deceit, will not with his lips deceive us; a man, who is really in charity with his neighbour, will not wound his feelings, as take away his good name. A man who is really pure in heart, will not speak such things, as make innocence ashamed; and disgrace the name of religion.²

On the Sunday after Ascension Day one year, he preached on 1 Peter, iv. 8, (Charity shall cover a multitude of sins), and he introduced his third point with,

All these good feelings, and good principles, will soon perish and fade away within us; unless

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- 1 Bonner, George - Memoir of the life of Rgt. Rev. Reginald Heber, D.D. p.19.
 - 2 Heber, Reginald - Sermons on the Lessons, The Gospel, or the Epistle. Vol.1, p.405.

we bring them, into constant application, by acts of daily kindness; by acquainting ourselves with the wants, and distresses of our neighbours; and, above all, by denying ourselves some portion of our own comforts and pleasures, for their sake, and in order to their assistance. Not only, are services produced by love; but love itself is yet more certainly produced by acts of kindness and attention. We are always, for the time, well disposed towards those whom we assist.¹

In the directness of these passages, there is a modernity and timelessness which would speak to the hearts of listeners in St. Paul's, London, today, as it undoubtedly did to the gentry and farm folk gathered in Hodnet parish church over one hundred and thirty years ago. Heber's style of writing in his "Travel Journals" (Russia and India) has been criticized for its "terrific sentences and reverberant phrases" which, from their great exponent, have since been known as "Johnsonese". Montefiore stresses the environment in which Heber had lived and received his education:

The books he read, the sermons he heard, the speech of the people among whom he lived, were couched in language which was rather elaborate than simple, artificial than natural; it drew its words by preference from Latin, and the Saxon of Shakespeare's English was entirely out of vogue.²

His normal language was the literary - the learned language of the period. This seems a just criticism and must be borne in mind while reading the writings of Heber. But with this in mind,

1 Ibid. p.441.

2 Montefiore, Arthur - Reginald Heber, Bishop of Calcutta, p.105.

it is all the more noteworthy that his parish sermons are directed to the minds of his hearers and were written with greater directness and less flourish than he ordinarily used in his writing.

We do have his sermons, lifeless as they may at first appear to be in print, to help us assess his style, but we have even less on which to reconstruct his spoken delivery of the sermons. Heber himself has left us only four references and two of these were made by hearers. A few other reactions have been found. Together, they are hardly enough to provide us with a clear picture of the live Heber in action in his pulpit, but such as there are, we submit. He preferred to preach from a manuscript, which was the accepted custom within the Church; and the majority of the congregations, according to Overton, seem to have preferred that they should be so.¹ In illustrating the "singularities" he meant to avoid he specified,

the High Churchman who snuffles in a pompous tone through his nose, and the Evangelical minister who preaches extempore.²

Though he disdained this form of preaching, because it was so closely associated with the excesses of the Dissenters, it is interesting to observe that at one time in his career, just

1 Dr. Henry Burgess in his Art of Preaching, for the use of theological students and younger clergy of the Church of England, stated - "as a rule written sermons must ever be the chief performances of the clergy of the Church of England." p.120.

2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol. I. p. 551.

before leaving England, he did trust himself to speak "from the overflow" of his emotions. His message, it is true, was a reply to a charge delivered to him by Bishop Kaye, and not a sermon - but the method employed was extempore. We have no way of knowing whether he ever conquered his manner of reciting poetry, once described by an Oxford associate as "never looking at his hearers, and with eyes downcast and fixed, he poured forth in a measured intonation.....stores of every age." Southey commented on his nervous manner in conversation, but said that he understood it disappeared when he was engaged in his churchly functions.

Heber provides one general hint as to the audience reaction when, mid-way in his second year, he reports progress in affairs of the Church and adds a confessional note to John Thornton:

I have reason to believe that both my conduct and my sermons are well liked, but I do not think any great amendment takes place in my hearers.¹

Henry Southey and Augustus Hare heard him, and each claimed to be much impressed. One listener, who was not so favourably impressed, was Lady West, wife of Sir Edward West, Chief Justice of the King's Court of Bombay, who first met him and who heard him preach several times when Heber visited Bombay in 1825.

1 Ibid. p.352.

Her comments are brutally frank and of special interest in allowing us to see the picture of Heber through the eyes of this woman of society. The portions of her journal in which the Hebers are mentioned provides valuable documentation for his visit to that city, and will be referred to in a subsequent chapter. Following, are the pertinent references and comments which Lady West made:

- April 24 The Bishop preached this morning
 ...The discourse was long and the matter
 pretty good, but the delivery was bad,
 and the voice harsh and unpleasing....
- May 1 Church very full, as the Bishop
 preached. He is not to me at all a fine
 or very interesting preacher.....
- May 5 He made a very appropriate speech, and
 one knows him so good and so superior a
 man that every word has, I hope, a good
 effect. But he cannot be eloquent, having
 a little hesitation.¹

In weighing this evidence, it should be remembered that Heber had been ill with fever and, by testimony of several, had aged considerably in the time he had been in India. With this noted, we must admit Lady West is the most discerning and incisive eye-ear witness we have for the sermonic delivery of Reginald Heber. Whatever his faults and pulpit mannerisms, they were not important enough to prevent him from being recognized as one of the better preachers in England.

While the style and delivery of a preacher are important, the fundamental portion of his pulpit work on which he should

1 Drewitt, F.D. - Bombay in the Days of George IV.
 pp.175-177.

be judged is - the message he delivers - the content of the sermon itself.

The object of preaching, taught Dr. Burgess, is to edify people - warn them, guard them against dangers, instruct them in the doctrines of the faith, comfort them in the troubles of life, and strengthen them in the hopes of a happy immortality. This definition is still basically true of the best present-day preaching. The timelessness of the Word of God may be brought into sharper focus, by preaching, in some periods of history, than in others. When it is clothed in the contemporary dress it becomes timely. A combination of these two factors, timelessness and timeliness, is found in good sermons.

Reginald Heber's parish sermons are characterized by the range of his scriptural and historical knowledge. These Hodnet sermons are simple and direct in development. He preached to the people and their needs. Many illustrations from his sermons might be selected to show the directness of his preaching, but the following will suffice. His congregation was a rural one, and that Heber sought to speak in a manner which would be meaningful to them is observable:

Sometimes, his blessings come down, as it were rain, to refresh the thirsty soul. Sometimes His word and sacraments have power to give us inward strength; like manure at the roots; and to change our wild and stubborn natures to the reason of men, and the submission of Christians. There are none among us, (I will venture to say) who have not had some such visitations, as I have described, from the heavenly gardener; but how few among us have duly recollected the object for which these visitations were sent; and that, if these do not succeed, in causing

us to bring forth fruit, the axe, and the fiery flame, are all which remain for us. (Text: St.Luke xiii 9).¹

The effects of German Biblical Higher Criticism had not as yet made an impression upon English theological thought. Heber, with his thorough knowledge of the Bible, loved it with a simplicity and a literalness, unshaken by doubts. This is shown in a passage in interesting juxtaposition with the idea of evolution:

I will now speak of angels in general, of those glorious companies who are obedient to God's will, and who fly swiftly both in Heaven and earth to fulfil His commandments. That such blessed creatures there are, who have, from time to time, communicated His messages to prophets and holy men, and have in pursuance of His decree, either comforted or delivered His Saints in their afflictions and dangers, we cannot, if we believe the Scriptures, disbelieve. We might, indeed, have been led to suppose, even if the Scriptures had not revealed the fact to us, that, placed as we are in the scale of created things, and observing, as we must do, the gradual progress of this scale from stones to plants, from plants to animals, and among them from the oyster or the worm to the noblest of the animal creation, and from them to man, we have good reason to suppose that there are other creatures as far superior to the wisest men, as the wisest man is to the beasts which perish. (Text: Revelation, xii 7).²

Indifference, on the part of man, to spiritual truth is an age old problem which the minister, guide and counsellor must grapple with. Heber had those in his parish who put secondary

1 Heber, Reginald - Sermons on the Lessons, The Gospel or the Epistle. Vol.II. p.12.

2 Ibid. pp.276-277.

things first, and failed to "seek first the kingdom of God and His Righteousness". He described them aptly in this passage from his sermon, "But one thing is needful":

They will rise early and labour late, in the pursuit of a livelihood; to make the trifling profit of a few pounds; they will not grudge long journeys, or laborious thought: they will risk cheerfully their lives, or limbs, for a little worldly praise, or an advantageous situation; and yet, when the care of their souls is the object, how idle do these active men become. Ask such to walk a little mile, to worship in the house of God; and he will tell you, the roads are deep; or the weather foul; or he has some trifling business to settle; or he is tired or unwell: some excuse is always offered; he is cumbered with much serving; and careful after many things: and no excuse is thought too weak to offer to his own conscience, and to that terrible God, by whom the secrets of the hearts are known. (Text: St. Luke x 42).¹

In a Lenten sermon, we find a selection wherein he directed the application of the text to the young people, present in the congregation, in these words:

My young friends, - for, in what I am now saying, it is you, who are most concerned, - my young friends, I need not, I trust I need not, ask you, whether you love your father and your mother; whether you really desire to be a comfort and blessing to their old age; and to make them some amends for the pain, the toil, the anxiety, and self-denial, which your birth and bringing up have cost them? Remember, then, that it is by your soberness, your diligence, your chastity and godliness, that your parents are most honoured before men and angels; that every unworthy act of yours goes to the heart of those who gave you birth: and that Hell will be more

1 Ibid. pp.46-7.

bitter to them; and the happiness of Heaven itself, imperfect, if they find you with them in Hell, or are without you in Heaven. Be such, then, as they desire you to be; - yea rather be such as you ought to be; and as God commands and enables you to become; and your parents shall bless your name in the life which now is; and rejoice over you in the Day of Judgment. (Text: St.Luke xi 27-28).¹

Prayer was to Reginald Heber a natural act of life, and concern for the welfare of others was one of the shining facets of his radiant personality. These two elements joined in his sermon for the nineteenth Sunday after Trinity, one year.

How, if we believe in good earnest, that God is faithful, who hath promised to hear our prayers, - how, if we call ourselves Christians, can we deny so cheap and easy and effectual a succour to our miserable perishing brother? How, if we never pray for any but ourselves, can we hope that Christ will pray for us? How can we pretend to charity, if the very warmth of our feelings does not itself constrain us to breathe a wish, a sigh, an ejaculation in behalf of them in whose wants we profess to sympathize? It is alas! a very different feeling from humility, or diffidence in our own merits, which keeps us from such intercession; it is a lazy indifference to all but our own immediate fears; a desire to get to Heaven at as cheap a rate as we can; and a sordid grudging of every additional moment, which we spare to God, that shortens thus our addresses to Him; and make us content to mutter over, with all possible expedition, those prayers alone which relate immediately to ourselves. (Text: St.Matthew ix 2).²

The scriptural lessons of the Bible found a sympathetic, earnest and sincere expression in the pulpit of Reginald Heber.

1 Ibid. p.268. Vol.I.

2 Ibid. pp.268-269. Vol.II.

His great knowledge of the Scriptures provided the basis for all his sermons.

It would be expected that the Poet and the Preacher would merge on occasion. A word picture, framed in the spirit of poetry, is found in a passage, fittingly enough, in his farewell sermon, preached at the Hodnet church on his last Sunday there.

Life bears us on like the stream of a mighty river. Our boat, at first, glides gently down the narrow channel, through the playful murmurings of the little brook and the windings of its grassy borders. The trees shed their blossoms over our young heads; the flowers on the brink seem to offer themselves to our young hands; we are happy in hope, and we grasp eagerly at the beauties round us; but the stream hurries us on, and still our hands are empty.

Our course in youth and manhood is along a wider and deeper flood, and amid objects more striking and magnificent. We are animated by the moving picture of enjoyment and industry which passes before us; we are excited by some short-lived success; or depressed and rendered miserable by some equally short-lived disappointment. But our energy and our dependence are both in vain. The stream bears us on, and our joys and our griefs alike are left behind us; we may be shipwrecked, but we cannot anchor; our voyage may be hastened, but it cannot be delayed; whether rough or smooth, the river hastens towards its home, till the roaring of the ocean is in our ears, and the tossing of his waves is beneath our keel, and the lands lessen from our eyes, and the floods are lifted up around us, and the shore loses sight of us, and we take our last leave of earth and its inhabitants; and of our further voyage there is no witness but the Infinite and Eternal! (Text: 1 St. Peter ii 11).¹

1 Ibid. p.472.

His description of one's ship of life, with its implications of prophecy for his own, must have been often meditated upon in the years following his departure from the lovely village of Hodnet.

Standards of taste in sermons change, as they do in reading, music, dress, and other aspects of life. For this reason, the comment of a contemporary is more objective than is a judgment passed on sermons over a century after they were first uttered. The following is the judgment on Heber's sermons which appeared in the "Quarterly Review" in the year after his death:

At home, in his own parish, his sermons were very original - sometimes expanding into general views of the scheme and doctrines of revelation collected from an intimate acquaintance, not with commentators, but with the details of holy writ itself, frequently drawing ingenious lessons for Christian conduct, from the subordinate parts of a parable, a miracle, or a history, which a less imaginative mind would have overlooked - often enlivened by moral stories, with which his multifarious reading supplied him; and occasionally by facts which had come, perhaps, under his own observation, and which he thought calculated to give spirit or perspicuity to the truths he was imparting.¹

It has been remarked by a specialist in the field of homiletics in the Church of England of the last century, that, among the various classes of Dissenters, the character of the preachers who occupy the pulpit can frequently be known from

¹ Quarterly Review, Vol.35, 1827, p.454.

the state of their Bibles. The partiality of the preacher can be observed in the different conditions of the various parts of the New Testament, and of the whole of the Old Testament. In connection with this observation, the statement was made that,

in the Church of England, the whole Bible is more preached from than in any other section of the visible Church. This is owing, in a great measure, to the admirable distribution of the portions of Scripture in its public Services.¹

A comparative study of the texts used by Heber, compiled from his published and the MSS. sermons which are unpublished, make an interesting study. The texts of his published sermons total 100; and of these, 23 are from the Old Testament and 77 from the New Testament. Of the 68 MSS. sermons available at Hodnet Hall, 15 texts are from the Old Testament and 53 from the New Testament. From these totals, it will be seen that for every sermon from the Old Testament that Reginald Heber composed, he preached three from the New Testament. Of the 130 New Testament texts he used, 80 were from the Gospels. Matthew appeared to be his favourite book for sermon texts.² One of his most frequently preached texts was Luke x 42. The percentage of his total number of sermons, which these that remain represent, is, of course, unknown. The attrition of travel and time has doubtless been heavy. This small group undoubtedly indicates a

1 Burgess, Henry - Art of Preaching, pp.223-224.

2 Vide Appendix 10 - Listing of Heber's Sermon Texts.

much larger total output.

In his letters, he has left only a few references to his reading in sermons. Again, this should be construed only as an indication of his interest; probably, only the more interesting titles found mention in his letters. The first book reference is to one that he had acquired while on his Northern European Tour, and he commented on it to Thornton:

You will be amused and perhaps interested to hear that my Berlin Luther has afforded me much pleasure, and many valuable hints for sermons. Yet he is, in some places, inconceivably coarse, and generally displays great want of reading; but his strong mind makes ample amends. He is a sort of religious Cobbett; but with similar vulgarity of sentiment he has more eloquence, and writes, as far as I am a judge, excellent German.¹

In another letter he wrote, evidently in reply to an invitation from Thornton,

I shall of course be happy to add my name to the subscribers to Mr.Venn's sermons,² and, if any opportunity occurs in this neighbourhood, will mention them also to others.³

Another leading minister of the day, whose sermons he read and thoroughly approved, was the Rev.Thomas Chalmers. In one of his letters to R.W.Hay, Reginald wrote,

- let me hope you have read Chalmer's Sermons. I can at present read little else, so much am I taken with the richness of his

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- 1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I.p.362.
 - 2 The Rev.John Venn (1759-1813), Rector of Clapham, a leader of the Evangelicals.
 - 3 Thornton Collection - MS. Letter No.52.

matter, in spite of one of the worst styles that ever matter was encumbered with on this side of chaos. I heartily wish that somebody would translate him into French; his arguments would do infinite good to the cause of Christianity on the continent, and his beauties are precisely of the kind which lose nothing by transfusion into another language, and which would be extremely popular abroad. When I go to Oxford, next term, I will sound Bertin on the subject.¹

In mentioning these three writers of sermons, merely incidentally in his letters, Heber indicated the catholicity of his sermon reading: Lutheran; Evangelical, Church of England; and Church of Scotland. Other religious books which he indicated as being of interest were: "Zeal Without Innovation", by a Mr.Bean; "Coelebs", by Hannah More; Lord Teignmouth's "Sir William Jones"; "Analysis of Chronology" by the Irish divine, Dr.William Hales; and John Bowdler's "Select pieces in prose and verse". In these, his reading is balanced between those of the Evangelical and High Churchman parties.

A brief mention has previously been made of "The Force of Truth", by the Rev.Thomas Scott, which had called forth a lengthy private review of the work in response to a request from Charlotte Dod. Scott, a leading figure among the Evangelicals, was, like most of them, moderately Calvinist in theology. Heber's carefully delineated review provides us with a concise view of his theology and the key to his preaching.

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I.p.486.

As a holder of the Arminian view, he was in opposition to Mr. Scott at many points. He acknowledged his piety, purity of life and strength of faith, but stated with candour and fairness the reasons which had induced him to form different opinions at these certain points. Thus Heber, in his conclusion, succinctly stated the belief which he held:

We Arminians believe, as firmly as he can do, that man is, by nature, in a fallen state; the slave of evil passions; a prey to every temptation which assails him, and altogether unable to please God or merit Heaven. We believe that Christ died as a true sacrifice for the sins of all the world, and that the only means whereby we, to whom Christ is preached, obtain this salvation, is by faith in His merits and sufferings. We believe that the grace of the Holy Ghost is freely given for Christ's sake, to all who hear this Gospel, whereby they are enabled, if they will, to turn to Him and be saved; and we believe that it is by this grace only, - for a more abundant measure of which we are taught to pray and use our diligence, - that we are enabled to bring forth the fruit of good works, to be grateful to God in our hearts, and in our lives to show this gratitude. It is on His Righteousness we depend; it is from His grace that we derive everything; but we believe that we may, by our neglect or misconduct, forfeit these privileges, and cause this Divine help to be withdrawn from us; and we are, therefore, the more watchful over ourselves, and the more earnest in begging a continuance of those bounties of which we have not a grant for life, but which may cease at any moment. And this is, we conceive, all which Scripture has taught us on the subject, and we are sure that this is enough for holiness in this life, and for our hope of a better life hereafter.¹

Following this lucid exposition of his belief as an Arminian, the basis of his preaching, he revealed his life object as he

1 Ibid. p.547.

saw it, in relation to the variance in theological viewpoints in the Church:

To reconcile or soften these unhappy differences, so far as my age and situation have given me opportunities, has been through life the object constantly in my view, and the cause of several earnest and fruitless labours.¹

In this sentence we have the key to his role as a Churchman. As a lover of peace he had faithfully pursued this course; in his pulpit preaching, in his parish ministry, in his writings, and in his approach to the problems of life. It was the recognition of this gallant attitude by his friends and other Churchmen which was to open the door to his greater area of service on behalf of the Church of England.

An honour which brought him to the forefront of the preachers in England was the appointment as Bampton Lecturer. This appointment has always been considered as one of the highest honours bestowed by Oxford University on its clerical members. In Heber's case, its value was greatly enhanced because conferred at a much earlier age than it had been on any of his predecessors. Reginald observed his thirty-second birthday in the midst of the lecture series in the spring of 1815. He was not unmindful of this distinction. He chose as his subject, "The Personality and Office of the Christian Comforter". His series of eight lectures was founded on the

1 Ibid. p.549.

text, St. John, xvi. 7 - "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come; but if I depart I will send him unto you."

His choice of subject was hailed by one reviewer as,

a real refreshment to us by their bold deviation from the model which a Bampton lecturer is now ordinarily in the habit of prescribing to himself. If there is a department in theology which may be said to be cultivated even to exhaustion, it is that of exposing and denouncing the errors of Methodism.¹

On the composition of these lectures, Heber bestowed the greatest pains; revising, correcting, and altering them so frequently, that he was often still working on them the night before their delivery. The first three lectures, which were delivered before Easter, did not suffer from the lack of polish which was evident in the closing ones. A reviewer noted of the latter that they were,

written throughout in a manly and nervous style. The work would certainly have been much improved had it been got up with less haste. Abundantly proves author to have been a writer of no common order, possessing powers of illustration, a command of language, with an originality of conception, to which few ever attain.²

It was this "originality of conception" which resulted in the shower of criticism which caught the young scholar and preacher

1 British Review. Vol. X. No. XX. 1817. p.410.

2 Ibid. p.490.

out in the open when the orthodox storm broke. In compliance with the terms of the will of the founder of the series, Reginald prepared his lecture sermons for the press. The task weighed heavily on him as he had no curate at the time, and, as he wrote, "the season is so sickly, that between visiting the dying and burying the dead, my time is fully employed." "The Bampton Lectures for 1815" was dedicated to Lord Grenville, Chancellor of the university. He graciously acknowledged the honour when the book came from the publisher in the following year, and sent Heber a flattering testimonial to the merits of the work. And the reviews came! Heber's Oxford friends, who had advised a speedy publication, and had said that it was better that the lectures should be found fault with than not read at all, must have been satisfied with the reaction.

The "Christian Observer" review was favourable but critical, and Heber, in reply to a note from Thornton, wrote,

.....thank you for your kind advice respecting the best mode of replying to those points of the "Christian Observer" in which I conceived myself to be misrepresented.....as my works have to pass through the ordeal of the reviews, I should possibly have much stronger reasons for defending myself than those which were afforded by an article so obviously friendly as that in the "Christian Observer".....made me determine to remain silent and it was well that I did so, since I have since received a fierce attack from the British Critic, reflecting so unjustly on my orthodoxy as well as learning that some of my Oxford friends.....were unanimous in urging me to answer it.¹

1 Thornton Collection - MS. Letter unnumbered.

Although peace had been established on the Continent, the stillness and quiet of the English theological world was shattered by the review which appeared in the "British Critic" for December, 1816, and January, 1817. The writer of the review was the Rev. Frederick Nolan. His effort was termed "the intemperate and unwarranted, though learned, and generally orthodox attack."

Sifting through the maze of Nolan's charges and Heber's defence we discover that the central point of the whole attack was Heber's interpretation of the Comforter as meaning the promise of the Holy Scriptures. In the seventh lecture, having cleared the ground for his own theory, he proceeded to state and to justify the idea that, by the promise of the Comforter, is meant the promise of the Holy Scriptures, which Christ has dictated, and by which he is present in the Church, as its Comforter for ever. In Heber's words:

It is, then, as Dispenser of Supernatural truth,
and as Teacher of the Doctrine of Redemption
that the Holy Ghost sustains and has sustained
his character as the Comforter which should come.
And we conclude as Warburton concluded.....
...that this instruction is now conveyed to the
world, in the Scriptures of the New Testament. ¹

This interpretation, the 'British Review' critic agreed, was,

so repugnant to the general authority of the
Church of Christ in all ages, that we arrive
at what we consider the capital blot in this
laborious work.²

1 Heber, Reginald - The Personality and Office of the Christian Comforter. p.418.

2 British Review Vol.X. No.XX. 1817. p.423.

Reginald Heber's studied reply, while maintaining his main position, clarified a number of the minor points of criticism, and while the clergyman, Nolan, answered with a partial rebuttal, it was generally felt that Heber had sustained his position although it was not generally accepted. The manner of attack adopted by Nolan in the first review did not win him much support even from those who were of the same orthodox position. The general reaction was expressed by the 'British Review' critic, who wrote:

The mode of assault adopted in Mr. Nolan's criticisms is, we think, wholly unmerited by Mr. Heber. The world will, we are sure, concur with us in saying, that his name and character should have protected him from insinuations such as are there found. Nor have the objections themselves, according to our judgment, in general, any foundation.¹

It was agreed that Heber's Bampton lectures were a work of great research showing deep and varied reading, and they established his reputation in the theological world. Many dissented from his views on some of the speculative points, but all reviewers and judges felt compelled to do justice to the depth of learning, the variety of research, and the richness of illustration which the lectures displayed. The lectures suffered by their obscurity. Heber evidently felt the simple direct approach of the parish sermon form was not worthy of the University and, in the attempt to exemplify his reading and

1 Ibid. p.429.

knowledge, he fell into the trap of digression, and was obviously delayed in reaching his goal. The burst of criticism was delayed until the appearance of the printed lectures.

Another recognition of Heber's pulpit ability came in the autumn of 1816, when he received a letter from Dr. Frodsham Hodson, Principal of Brasenose College, enquiring whether Reginald had any objection to becoming one of the university preachers. The letter included a message from Dr. Van Mildert who, as Regius Professor, offered to nominate him. The nomination, which was for a two year term, pleased him as a mark of approval by his Oxford friends, especially that by Dr. Van Mildert, who was then recognized as one of the best preachers in England.

After Heber's pamphlet of defence against Nolan's attack had been published and Nolan had answered, he wrote, concerning it and the Oxford invitation, to Robert Wilmot, in an objective attitude,

In this light I regard myself as peculiarly fortunate in being appointed to preach again at Oxford, since a few popular sermons there, will do more to conciliate favour for my future efforts, and even to make men think well of my past doings, than all the answers which I can offer to charges so personal and offensive, as some of those which Mr. Nolan has brought against me.¹

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.I.p.482.

In the years of 1817 and 1818 Heber preached several times at St. Mary's as University preacher. His comments on these experiences are largely upon the changes in Oxford which he noted as contrasted to his years there. He found:

Sundry contemporaries grown bald and grave, and met sundry children of my friends in the country shot up into dashing young men..... ..
 ..Of the young men....the story is, that they were never so diligent and so orderly as at present; all which is put down to the account of the system of examination. There is really, I think, much less lounging than formerly, which is produced, of course, by the greater frequency and regularity of lectures; but hunting seems practised to a degree considerably beyond our times; and so far as I can learn, in general they worship the same divinities who are enumerated in the Herodotan account of the university.¹

In a letter to John Thornton written some months previously, he had mentioned the subject of his intended sermons at Oxford. One was on the existence, power and number of evil spirits, with a practical conclusion on the necessity of Christian watchfulness; a second concerned the protection afforded through the agency of Heavenly spirits by the Almighty; a third presented the gain of the Christian in dying, and a discussion of the various grounds of hope which men have built on against the fear of death; a fourth, he thought, would be of St. Paul's shipwreck, and the advantage of associating with persons of

1 Ibid. p.498-499.

holy character. He requested John to keep his subjects secret, as it was an advantage not to have one's texts known beforehand. Thornton, evidently, suggested changes, probably in view of the discussion on points of his Bampton lectures. Reginald's reply indicated he was sympathetic to them.

Thank you for your kind and judicious hints as to the subjects of my sermons. I am happy to say that even before I received your letter I had in part acted on its principles - in rejecting from my two sermons on Evil spirits much of a controversial nature, and enlarging, in its stead - the practical matter in the conclusion.

In the same letter, written from All Souls, he reported on his gratifying reception, and the attitude of the University students:

I preached both morning and evening, the congregation was both times I think, more numerous than ever I saw it in St. Mary's and I am sure you will be glad to hear that I have reason to believe that the sermons were on the whole, popular. God grant that they may do good! It gives me much pleasure to hear that the increase of the congregation in St. Mary's has been gradual for some time back, and that though I think there is more apparent dissipation in Oxford than there used to be. Yet the number of serious and well disposed young men is conceived to be, at present, greater by much than in my time. I learn this from those tutors who were undergraduates with me.¹

One of the undergraduates who heard him during his appearances in the pulpit of St. Mary's and was favourably impressed with

1 Thornton Collection - MS. Letter (unnumbered).

his discourses was Augustus Hare. Young Hare wrote to Lady Jones, 4th May, 1818, an exuberant letter filled with the joy of living, especially in England in the Spring,

Then we have had Reginald Heber here full of spirits at the idea of becoming a father. He came to preach, and did give us two such sermons - one on 'To die is gain', the other upon the choice of principled friends, - that, I believe if he were to settle here and become a regular preacher, he would bring church going, and perhaps religion itself, into practice - (!)¹

Reginald Heber, in spite of a pulpit delivery that was not of the highest quality, possessed an earnestness of feeling which, expressed in the high quality of his sermons, gained him a new opportunity in the service of his Church - the distinction of being elected to the preachiership of Lincoln's Inn, London. Mention has been made previously of his being successful in the contest for the post in 1822 after having tried, unsuccessfully, earlier against Dr.Charles Lloyd. The work of his friends certainly helped him to gain this honour, but he could not have been elected had he been a less-than-good preacher. He was opposed by the justly celebrated Dr.Edward Maltby, who succeeded Heber and held the pulpit for over nine years, being elected as Bishop of Chichester before relinquishing the honour.

Reginald Heber had now an opportunity of declaring the truths of the Gospel to a class of men whose talents and

1 Hare, Augustus J.C. - Memorials of a Quiet Life.Vol.I.
pp.187-8.

attainments, not to speak of their wealth, were likely to give them a commanding influence in the country.

Taylor, another early biographer of Heber, comments at some length on his sermons of this period. A careful reading of the quotation shows the spirit of conciliation which actuated Heber in his discourses, without compromising his theological principles.

The sermons he preached at Lincoln's Inn, though they were elaborate and highly finished compositions, and very different, in point of simplicity, to those he preached at Hodnet, were nevertheless distinguished for a full and lucid statement of the essential and peculiar doctrines of Christianity.

While Heber took care to compose them with the greatest pains, aware that they were to be delivered to men of the highest literary attainments, he was anxious to avoid making them mere moral essays, or curious disquisitions on subjects unconnected with the Gospel. Hence, while he cautiously avoided giving unnecessary offence, by thrusting into undue prominence those truths which he more than suspected would be, to some, greatly obnoxious he took care conscientiously to state, and, as occasion required, boldly to advocate those humiliating doctrines which debase the pride of man, and ascribe his salvation not to any merit of his own, but to the free mercy and grace of God, through Jesus Christ, received by a cordial and lively faith, and applied to the heart in the right use of divinely instituted means, only by the power of the Holy Spirit.¹

On the 18th May he preached his last sermon at Lincoln's Inn. His presentation on the Atonement, "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God", was a discourse of eloquence and reasonableness. As the large congregation moved out into

1 Taylor, T. - Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Right Reverend Reginald Heber.

the Square after the benediction, Mr Butterworth, a leading Wesleyan Methodist, exclaimed to Sir Thomas Dyke Acland;

'Oh Sir, thank God for that man! Thank God for that man!' Considering Mr Butterworth's station and influence among the Wesleyan Methodists, and almost the whole body of India Missionaries not directly connected with the Establishment, I felt at once all the value of such an impression upon his mind, both as to the disposition with which the Bishop would be met by these bodies on his arrival in India, and the effect which it was clear his intercourse with them would produce.¹

Reginald Heber had grown steadily in mental and spiritual stature during his ministry at Hodnet. The fresh incentive of congregations composed of university students and leading legal lights of the nation had inspired and challenged him to ever greater efforts. An Arminian in spirit, a devoted upholder of the Church, with an established name in the literary and theological circles of his country, he was a matured and well rounded personality, prepared for an enlarged field of service. As a preacher he presented the Gospel impressively and with conviction to the hearts and minds of his hearers. A liberal Churchman, he stood apart from the party friction of the High Churchmen and the Evangelicals. In his spirit of friendship and conciliation, he was admired and respected by clerical and lay leaders of both Parties of the Church and by political and social figures outside the Church.

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II.p.134.

Chapter Eight

THE BISHOPRIC OF CALCUTTA

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Thomas Fanshaw Middleton, the first Lord Bishop of Calcutta, India, died on 8th July, 1822 in the ninth year of his episcopal appointment. For over eight years he had presided over this distant outpost of the Church, engaged in building a sure foundation for the new ecclesiastical establishment. They had been difficult years; many trying problems had been encountered in that land which had known no Episcopal Bishop until he came. The first English traders had arrived in Surat in 1607 and the first Factory had been opened seven years later. For two hundred years Englishmen living in India had been served only by Chaplains of the East India Company¹ and its predecessors; from the coming of the Rev. Edward Terry, Chaplain to Sir Thomas Roe, first English Ambassador to the Mogul Court, down to the year 1814 when Bishop Middleton, the first Bishop to the newly created Anglo-India Church, arrived. It seems one of the omissions in British Government, that the Church had not been established in the new continent to grow apace with the economic trade, so carefully nurtured in that period. James S.M. Anderson, historian of the Colonial Church, has written of those two centuries:

1 Earliest Chaplain appointed by the Directors of the E.I.C. was the Rev. William Leske, who served at Surat from 1614 for three years before being relieved for unworthy conduct.

This inability of the English to plant themselves permanently in any part of India, and the consequent absence of any attempt to show themselves to the natives as Christian men, was the source of much evil; for it tempted them gradually to lose all sense of the obligation resting upon them to make that demonstration.¹

Becoming used to the religious observances and superstitions of the Hindus, they concluded that it was a duty, as well as a wise policy, to pass over all such matters without notice; and for the same reason, were content to keep in abeyance the distinctive character of their own faith, even when the opportunity for vindicating it was fairly presented to them. From these conditions may be traced the development of that spirit of apathy and irreligion which was, for so many years, a reproach to English rule in India, and which made the separation of the evil in the early nineteenth century so much more difficult. The indifference thus manifested was at variance with the feelings of many who watched at home in Britain, with eager interest, the progress of early relations with distant India.

The Chaplains, first sent out by provision of the East India Company, and later by the government with military units, were therefore concerned only with the spiritual welfare of their own men. And, unfortunately, in some cases their spiritual

1 Anderson, J.S.M. - History of the Colonial Church, p.269.

leadership was not of a high order. Other Chaplains wrote brilliant records during the terms of their service. Some of these early Chaplains were imbued with a missionary spirit, but it was not until during the reign of William and Mary that the conversion of the Gentoos (natives of India) was decreed in Letters Patent from the Crown.

The charter granted to the second East India Company in 1698 contained a clause, enacting that the said Company should constantly maintain 'one minister in every garrison and superior factory', that they should in such 'garrison or factories provide or set apart a decent and convenient place for divine services only'; and furthermore, that 'all such ministers as shall be sent to reside in India shall be obliged to learn, within one year after their arrival, the Portuguese language, and shall apply themselves to learn the native language of the country where they shall reside, the better to enable them to instruct the Gentoos, that shall be the servants or slaves of the said Company, or of their agents, in the Protestant Religion'.¹

This was the beginning of the bridge of communication and concern for the welfare of the people of India - a very small beginning but a start, nevertheless. Despite the clause, no great spurt of activity in missionary endeavour was noted in the greater part of the eighteenth century until near its end. The religious life of the Factory seemed to depend in large measure upon the example set by its President. Streylnsham Master stands out pre-eminently, among all the Presidents of Madras, as a man of strong religious conviction and devotion to the English Church. During his period of office he fined

1 Kaye, John W. - The Administration of The East India Company, p.625.

the Company members for failure to attend Matins and Evensong. The greatest event which happened, from the point of view of the Church, during this time was the building and consecration¹ of St.Mary's Church in the Fort at Madras. It was built almost entirely by money raised privately in Madras through the efforts and generosity of Master himself. St.Mary's, although not the first Christian Church in India, (the Roman Catholics and the Dutch Reformed had previously accomplished this), was the first English Church in India.² Streynsham Master was an exceptional Company President.

The consecration of St.Mary's Church at Madras in 1680, was followed, in 1709, by St.Ann's at Calcutta, and, by the first service in the newly consecrated Bombay Church, on Christmas Day, 1718. From that time, there was necessarily more outward recognition of the duties of religion; but save in such exceptional cases there was little genuine piety and no high moral standard. The number of chaplains increased as did the military and civil establishment during the remainder of the century. The Dutch were the first Protestant nation who had an opportunity of promoting Christianity in their conquests. But, it was missionary work started in 1706 in a small Danish

1 Company Chaplains up to this period had not received any license from the Bishop of London; therefore, it was necessary for the Rev.Richard Portman to be licensed before he could receive the Bishop's commission to consecrate the Church.

2 Chatterton, Eyre - A History of The Church of England in India, pp.27-8.

Settlement of Tranqueber, south of Madras, by order of the King of Denmark, Frederick Christian IV, by the missionary, Ziegenbalg, which excited interest in Protestant Europe and especially in England. There, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (S.P.C.K.), which had been formed in 1698, undertook to support some of the Danish and German missionaries in South India.

Their reasons for doing so were obvious. There were at that time no Englishmen who were prepared to leave home and country to face the trials and loneliness of an Indian missionary's life. These men who were devout and learned and who made this great sacrifice, were naturally objects of admiration to many in England, as well as to many in India.¹

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (S.P.G.) was formed in 1701. Both societies promoted the diffusion of Bibles and other religious literature as their chief object. Not until the nineteenth century did these societies come into their own as vigorous movements within the Church, but they served to keep alive the flame, during this time of spiritual torpor and darkness.

When the dynamic of the Wesleyan Revival had spread throughout Britain, there was stimulus among the English to carry the Gospel, themselves, to foreign lands. The Baptists, in 1793, were the first to enter the field from England with their support of Joshua Marshman, William Ward and William

1 Ibid. p.103.

Carey, in a mission at Danish Serampore, above Calcutta. (The East India Company refused them permission to establish a mission in Calcutta). The London Missionary Society, formed by Dissenters and Evangelicals of the Church in 1798, was followed seventeen years later by a new missionary group within the Established Church, known as the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.). Agitation for its formation came from the leading Evangelicals.

In the closing decades of the eighteenth century, when the East India Company was most adverse to direct missionary efforts in their territories, there was a succession of ardent Company Chaplains, Evangelical in sympathy, who came out to India, and who were largely responsible for starting distinctly missionary work before the English Church Missionaries arrived. Outstanding among these Chaplains were: David Brown, Claudius Buchanan,¹ Henry Martyn, Daniel Corrie, and Thomas Thomason. Behind them at home, was Charles Simeon, whose position at Cambridge, as Fellow of King's College and Vicar of Holy Trinity, Cambridge, gave him a unique opportunity for influencing the younger and more religious men of his University.

The early years of the new century, in the Church of England, were marked by increased interest in the cause of

¹ Claudius Buchanan was educated at Queen's College, Cambridge, at the expense of Henry Thornton (John Thornton's uncle).

missions. The C.M.S. was active in promoting missionary work in Sierra Leone, a colony for liberated slaves on the shores of Africa. The brief and romantic life of Henry Martyn, saint and scholar, stirred interest in India, in the public mind. To the coals of interest, Chaplain Buchanan added fresh fuel with his "Memoir of the Expediency of an Ecclesiastical Establishment for British India" - a book which created a great sensation and raised violent opposition. This publication followed his idea, in 1803, of a prize competition for students in the universities and public schools of the United Kingdom "On certain subjects.....connected with the civilization and moral improvement of India". Oxford did not accept the competition until 1805 (Reginald Heber was absent from the University that year); however, in the first year, representatives from Cambridge, Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities and Eton were awarded prizes.

A mutiny which had broken out among the natives of Vellore, India, and their disaffection was attributed, by men who had been hostile enough to the evangelizing plan before, to their fears lest they were going to be Christianized by force. In England in 1807, appeared a "Letter to the Chairman of the East India Company, on the Danger of interfering in the Religious Opinions of the Natives of India and on the Views of the British and Foreign Bible Society as directed to India." This pamphlet argued that, when religious innovations should set foot in that country, indignation would spread from one end of

Hindustan to the other and fifty millions of natives would drive the English away. The pamphlet was answered by Mr. Owen, secretary of the Bible Society, and by Bishop Porteus of London. The battle was taken up by a Major Scott Waring still more fiercely in two pamphlets, entitled respectively, "A Vindication of the Hindoos from the Expressions of Dr. Claudius Buchanan; with a Refutation of his Arguments for an Ecclesiastical Establishment in British India: by a Bengal Officer"; and "Observations on the Present State of the East India Company; with Prefatory Remarks on the alarming intelligence lately received from Madras as to the general disaffection prevailing amongst the natives of every rank, from an opinion that it is the intention of the British Government to compel them to embrace Christianity: by Major Scott Waring". In these statements, the author argued that if India were worth preserving, the confidence of the people should be regained by the immediate recall of every English missionary, and by prohibiting every person of the Company's service from taking part in circulating the translations of the Scriptures in Hindustan. To answer the charge, an ex-Governor-General of India, Lord Teignmouth, wrote a sensible, moderate pamphlet, "Considerations on Communicating the Knowledge of Christianity to the Natives of India". On the side of the opponents of Indian missions was the powerful Edinburgh Review, in which the Rev. Sydney Smith wrote a violent article when the controversy was at its height in 1808.

The controversy simmered down and died out. During the years from 1806 to 1810, the S.P.G. Society's Anniversary Sermons advocated "the claims of India on England from a missionary point of view".¹ One of the courses recommended was the introduction of an English Bishop, in line with the suggestion publicised by Chaplain Buchanan some years before. The approaching renewal of the Charter of the East India Company seemed to offer a favourable opportunity for renewing the efforts for an "ecclesiastical establishment". The way had been prepared.

Great pressure was brought to bear upon Parliament from the outside; nine hundred addresses from all parts of the kingdom, imploring the interference of the legislature in behalf of the moral and religious interest of India, were presented.²

Two more pertinent pamphlets flowed from the pen of Dr. Buchanan. Robert Southey, soon to be Poet Laureate, wrote to his long time school friend, C.W.W. Wynn:

What part do you take in the East Indian question? I perceive its magnitude, and am wholly incapable of forming an opinion.³

There was a long debate in the House of Commons, in which Wilberforce did a noble piece of pleading on behalf of the bill; and the Act which renewed the Charter of the Company

1 Digest of the S.P.G. Records 1701-1892, p.472.

2 Overton, John - The English Church in the Nineteenth Century, p.271.

3 Southey, Charles C.- Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey, Vol.IV. p.12.

(1813), erected their territories into one vast diocese, presided over by a Bishop with an Archdeacon resident at each of the three Presidencies - Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay. It was a small establishment which was provided, and the human cost, on the part of the bishops appointed there, was to be terrific before the establishment was enlarged twenty years later. When the See of Calcutta (comprising the whole of the British East Indies) was established the following year, Dr. Thomas Fanshaw Middleton, a High Churchman, was selected as its first Bishop. His appointment was a wise one, and the Evangelicals who, as a party, had worked strenuously for the project, recognized its wisdom and accepted it in good spirit. William Wilberforce wrote in his Journal for 1814,

The Bishop of Calcutta, Teignmouth, and C. Grant dined with me. Long and interesting talk with Bishop Middleton. He seems very earnest, and pondering to do good; hopes for Churches in different parts of India; favourable to schools and a public library, and a college with discipline.¹

Bishop Middleton's appointment was right in that "he was just the man to make the movement respectable", writes Overton. His character was irreproachable; he had been a most active parish priest; he was one of the first scholars of the day; and he was a strong spirited High Churchman. Of him, his biographer has written,

1 Wilberforce, Robert I. and Samuel - Life of William Wilberforce, p.352.

He went out to India, as he entered the Church in England, under the profound conviction that episcopacy is not merely one of many convenient forms of governing the Church of Christ, but that it is the form which was originally instituted by his Apostles, and which without interruption or question, had been continued from generation to generation, from the Apostolic times to the days of Calvin. He therefore felt a dispensation laid upon him to maintain all the rights and prerogatives attached to the episcopal function and character, inviolable.¹

He was not a man to be afraid of showing his colours. In view of the strong feeling against the new establishment which existed in some quarters, the consecration service of Dr. Middleton, held in the Chapel of Lambeth Palace, the 8th May, 1814, was a private one, and the sermon preached on that occasion was suppressed. Those of the opposition who had feared, or hoped for, a rising tide of indignation from the natives when the Bishop set foot in India must have been disappointed when he wrote:

The natives, so far from feeling the agitation and alarm which has been talked of, applaud what has been done. I am credibly assured, that, before my arrival, many of them said, it would raise us in their estimation: 'You have a head of your army and a head of your law, and of every department, but your religion'.²

For eight years and two months exactly, the Bishop laboured at the task of clearing the ground and laying the

1 Le Bas, Charles W. - The Life of Thomas Fanshaw Middleton, D.D., Vol.II.p.335.

2 Ibid. Vol.I. p.73.

foundations of the Church of England in India. He appointed Archdeacons to Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras, and regulated their duties. He greatly improved the Free Schools in Calcutta and made the work of the S.P.C.K. a living power in India. A long visitation tour of his diocese in South and Western India lasted twelve months. He consecrated churches in Madras and Bombay, preaching and confirming at services which he held during his travels. In 1818, he launched his cherished scheme for the building of Bishop's College in Calcutta for the education of Indian Clergy from all parts of India. This was to be his monument. While the building was being constructed, he constantly visited it; and it was a visit to it, paid during the hot part of the day, which was responsible for his death. Of him, Chatterton quotes Dr. Barnes, the Archdeacon of Bombay,

It would be scarcely reasonable to expect another so great and so good a man as Dr. Middleton, at once a scholar and divine who from conscientious motives was firmly attached to the Church. He lived in very difficult times and supported the Church's interest with firmness and judgment. His only fault was something of a high carriage in his public demeanour which gave an unfavourable impression to many. Unfortunately, he had no sound legal adviser, when legal advice would have been of the greatest benefit to him. He was a powerful preacher. He sacrificed literary eminence and effort to come to India.¹

He had laboured hard and cleared the way for the growth of the Church of England in India.

1 Chatterton, Eyre - A History of the Church of England in India, p.128.

When Amelia Heber heard of the death of Bishop Middleton, while visiting her father in Wales, she had a premonition that, if the vacant See were offered to her husband, he would accept it. For many years, from his country parish, he had followed with interest the progress made by Christianity, wherever English influence extended; and he had assisted, by every means within his power, the exertions of the various religious societies to which he belonged; but more especially to India had his thoughts and views been directed. In his mind's eye, he had travelled with Henry Martyn, crossing its sultry regions, sharing his privations, sympathizing in his sufferings; and had exulted in the prospects of success occasionally opened to him. Reading of the work of the Chaplains and of the missionaries, he had frequently expressed the wish that he too could share their experiences. India, from his reading, held a romantic charm for him, with an ancient history, varied religions, people with new and strange customs, and scenery of beauty and interest. With his wife by his side, he had studied the maps of the East and traced long journeys in imagination. Knowing all this, Amelia thought, too, of the fact that the recommendation of Bishop Middleton's successor was in the power of their friend of many years, Charles W. Williams Wynn, who, a year before, had become the President of the Board of Commissioners for the affairs of India.

And Mrs. Heber's premonitions proved accurate. Wynn lost little time in writing to Reginald. His letter was peculiar

in that he did not, in so many words, offer him the bishopric; rather was an offer implied in a specific request for his opinion, in confidence, concerning those who had been, or were likely to be, mentioned as possibilities. His letter merits attention:

My dear Reginald,

East India Office, December 2,
1822.

You will have seen in the newspapers the death of the Bishop of Calcutta. I cannot expect, and certainly do not wish, that with your fair prospects of eminence at home, you should go to the Ganges for a mitre. Indeed, £5000 per annum for fifteen years, and a retiring pension of £1500 at the end of them, is not a temptation which would compensate you for quitting the situation and comforts which you now enjoy, if you were certain of never being promoted. You would, however, extremely oblige me by giving me, in the strictest confidence, your opinion as to those who have been, or are likely to be suggested for that appointment; and you would add to the obligation, if you could point out anyone who, to an inferior degree of theological and literary qualification, adds the same moderation, discretion, and active benevolence, which would make me feel that, if you were not destined, I trust, to be still more usefully employed at home, I should confer the greatest blessing upon India in recommending you.

Ever most faithfully your's,
C.W.Williams Wynn.¹

This note is the first in an interesting exchange of letters between Heber and Wynn. Some readers have interpreted Reginald's hesitancy in this matter to be vacillation, the course of a man who didn't know his own mind. This was not the case. It

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II.p.97.

is true that there was a real conflict of mind, peculiar to Heber, and similar to conflicts at earlier stages of his life. He wanted to go to India in the service of the Church, but, he questioned if he had the right to make that decision over the lives of his loved ones, his wife and his young daughter. This was the basis of the conflict in his mind - the dilemma of Service and Love.

His reply was dated five days later, owing to a delay in receiving the first letter, and the necessity of thinking it through for another day. Reginald asked for time to consider the possibility of accepting and to discuss it with his wife, his brother and his mother. It should be noted that he also stated:

There is one case, indeed, in which, however anxious I or they may be for the appointment, I should wish you to put me decidedly out of the question; I mean if any eligible person should be found among the archdeacons and chaplains already in India.....and the advancement of a deserving man among their own number, might be a beneficial stimulus to the activity and circumspection of the inferior clergy.¹

On the same day, he wrote to his wife at Bodryddan informing her of Wynn's letter of enquiry. He told her he recognized that C.W.W.Wynn did not absolutely offer the situation to him, though he said he should have been willing to name him if it suited Heber; and he was hesitant to ask for it, because his

1 Ibid. pp.98-9.

opinion was asked for.

After recounting the substance of his reply to Wynn, he discussed the opportunity such a change offered, the pleasures and sacrifices involved, especially, the problem of how the climate of India would affect the health of his wife and daughter. Balanced with these questions was the thought, would he be doing God more acceptable service by going than by staying at home. This letter is important for the reason that it reveals his thought on the role he would play if he were bishop, and which, subsequently, he came to perform.

In the acceptance of this bishopric I should be, at least, sure that I was not actuated by secular or unworthy views. I verily believe and hope that I should be of considerable use there by moderating between the two missionary societies, and directing their efforts in accordant and useful channels.¹

The letter reveals a strong consideration on the part of the rector for the welfare of the Indian Church and its clergy; of other divines who may be better equipped for the position; and of his family. It is characteristic of him, in that it is utterly selfless.

Wynn's reply, dated 10th Dec. 1822, pointed out that the great delay in time involved was a decided and insuperable objection to the appointment of any of the archdeacons in India to the Bishopric, as they would have to return to England for consecration. The length of the vacancy would thereby be over two years. He would make no recommendation to Reginald about

1 Ibid. p.100.

accepting the Bishopric, feeling it involved so much his own happiness, but he added,

and I should feel that I was not doing my duty to the millions of India, if I did not afford every facility in my power towards your undertaking the task.¹

One can appreciate Wynn's attitude toward going to India, in the light of a letter which he had written over six years prior to his assuming the responsible position he then held in relation to its affairs. In a letter to his friend, Robert Southey, he disclosed his feeling on the subject:

20 May, 1815

It is surprising to me that men whose fortunes are not absolutely desperate at home will go to India to seek them; that is, men who have any feeling beyond what is connected with the sense of touch. Fourteen years transportation is a heavy sentence;...What a portion of human life is this, and of its best years! After such an absence the pain of returning is hardly less severe, and perhaps more lasting than that of departure. He finds his family thinned by death; his parents, if he finds them at all, fallen into old age, and on the brink of the grave; the friends whom he left in youth so changed as to be no longer the same. What fortune can make amends for this!²

Feeling this way, Wynn could not encourage his friend, Reginald Heber, to go out to India. Wynn held to this attitude for his lifetime; it is said that he thrice refused the post of Governor-General of India!

1 Ibid. p.102.

2 Southey, Charles C. - Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey, Vol.IV. p.109.

The Rector consulted with his brother, his mother, Dean Shipley, his father-in-law, and with two doctors concerning the effect of India's climate upon their baby, Emily. Richard felt it was for Amelia to make the decision; her parents gave their approval. Mother Heber was composed in her heartache, but, while talking with Reginald and assuring him that he should do what he considered right, she broke down and, crying bitterly, exclaimed, "I am seventy-one; I never can expect to see you again." The doctors disagreed in their reports. On being informed of that disagreement, Reginald requested his brother to gain the advice of a London doctor, and, on his recommendation concerning what was best for the baby, the issue would be decided. Anticipating that the answer might be favourable for the infant for a short stay in the warm climate, he asked Wynn to express his opinion of the useful contribution which he, Heber, could make to the problems of the Church in India. At the end of the month, Wynn, in his reply, wisely declined to make the decision for him but did remark,

I must, in candour, state, on the other hand, that I do not know of any situation where I believe that your virtues and your talents would find ampler scope for their exertion, or where their effect would be more essentially beneficial to your fellow-creatures. I can truly state, that I believe you most peculiarly qualified for it.¹

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II.p.107.

The London doctor's decision indicated that the little one could be kept safely at Calcutta till six and then she should be returned to England for seven years. Reginald decided that though he was fully persuaded the Calcutta bishopric was greatly preferable to what might come to him later, or not at all, he could not venture to take the child out to India under these conditions. He made this decision on December 29th, before leaving for Bodryddan where he promised to write again. On January 2nd, he confirmed the previous letter, after talking it over with his wife and her family. The decision met with Wynn's approval; "in your place I should have determined as you have done", concluded his letter to Reginald.

Wynn must have been surprised when, within five days, Reginald wrote giving the information that a friend had written to consult a physician who had had long experience in Bengal concerning the possible effect on the health of the child, and requesting that Wynn hold up his previous decision until he had received this new report. The report, when it came four days later, was more favourable but not favourable enough to induce him to alter his first opinion. However, in reporting to Wynn, he again showed how much he wanted to go. And, for that reason, Williams Wynn was not surprised when a letter sent the following day, 12th January, 1823, revealed that Amelia had suggested his retracting, and accepting the offer - if it had not been offered to another. She has written, "his regret for having abandoned what he deemed the path of duty marked out

for him by Providence, was so great", that she persuaded him to write to Wynn immediately. Arrangements regarding their child were also settled to his satisfaction. Wynn's reply expressed his personal feelings; indicated that he thought the Company directors would provide him with a house; and stated that he was submitting his name for the approbation of the King.

One of the most significant documents concerning this part of Heber's life is the letter, written by C.W.W.Wynn, in his official capacity, recommending to His Majesty King George the Fourth the approval of the Reverend Reginald Heber to the vacant Bishopric of Calcutta. In it, Wynn states the reasons for his recommendation, and the way in which Reginald Heber fulfils the exacting conditions which are required for the Second Lord Bishop of Calcutta at that stage in the development of the Church in India:

East India Office
Thursday, 16th of January, 1823.

Mr Williams Wynn respectfully submits to your Majesty the humble recommendation of the Reverend Reginald Heber to succeed to the vacant Bishopric of Calcutta. In filling a situation of so much delicacy and importance, it becomes necessary to look for a combination of merits almost opposite, and which are rarely found in the same person. While it is requisite that he who is to preside over the Church in India should be strictly orthodox and correct in doctrine, and that he should possess zeal, energy, and habits of business, to enable him to discharge the active duties of so extensive a charge, and to maintain his legitimate authority, the security of the Empire demands temper, discretion, and tolerance which will dispose him to conciliate the general feeling, to communicate on friendly terms with the various denominations of Christians,

and to moderate the enthusiasm of those who would interfere offensively with the religious opinions and superstitions of the natives.

From long and intimate knowledge of Mr. Heber's character, Mr. Williams Wynn feels convinced that if your Majesty should be graciously pleased to approve of this recommendation, he will be found to unite these various qualifications in an eminent degree, and that his high literary and theological reputation will give additional lustre to the appointment.

Mr. Williams Wynn would have felt it his duty personally to have taken your Majesty's commands on a subject of this importance if he had not presumed that your Majesty would prefer not to be intruded upon at the present moment.¹

Two days later Wynn communicated the King's approval of the Appointment in a note to Reginald:

East India House, Jan. 18. 1823.

The King has returned his entire approbation of your appointment to Calcutta, and if I could only divide you so as to leave one in England and send the other to India, it would also have mine; but the die is now cast, and we must not look at any side but that which stands uppermost.

Ever Your's
C.W.W. Wynn.²

The die was cast. The full awareness of the momentous decision he had made, the sacrifices of friends and family which he would have to make, and the overwhelming responsibility he was going to have to shoulder, appeared in his request to John Thornton:

1 Aspinall, A. (Ed.) The Letters of George IV. Vol. II. 1815-1823. p. 552.

No. 1060 Charles Watkin Williams Wynn to the King.

2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol. II. p. 113.

Pray for me, my dear Thornton, that my life and doctrine may be such as they ought to be; that I may be content in my station, active in my duty, and firm in my faith, and that, when I have preached to others, I may not be myself a castaway.¹

The ambition, which had spurred him on in his University career and in his literary activities, had been a sore trial to his spirit of humility throughout the six weeks of mental conflict concerning the invitation to the See of Calcutta. Smith's biography of Bishop Heber contains a frank, soul-searching letter from Reginald to Charlotte Dod written at the same time as his letter to John. That he might have made his decision because of avarice or ambition bothered his conscience, and he wrote,

On the whole, I have acted for the best; and if I have acted on mistaken principles, or if vanity or avarice have secretly swayed me, I hope God will pardon me, and even turn this error of mine for good.....
.....I felt the increasing risk of living too much in company, of becoming a candidate as a popular preacher for applause or patronage, of dangling after court favour, and perhaps conforming too much my own opinions to what were fashionable and likely to promote my rise in my profession, in short, in a bad sense of becoming all things to all men.

You yourself, my beloved sister, have cautioned me against this defect in my character, a defect which would naturally increase in proportion as my circumstances became worse, my situation more dependent, and my habits of life more conversational. From these temptations I now escape. Where I am going I shall have no further preferment to look for.....

1 Ibid. p.114.

In the same letter, he indicated that he recognized the significant position which he had maintained toward the two Church parties, and its importance in making his distinctive contribution to the work of the newly established Church in India:

I am (what not many clergymen at this moment are) on good terms with and well thought of both by the Evangelicals and High Churchmen, and can, therefore, advantageously correspond with the missionary societies connected with either party, and perhaps prevent the jealousies of both from interfering with the success of their labours.¹

In the course of his life and ministry, his personality and character had become so moulded that, while he was staunch in his principles, he was conciliatory in his conduct.

A moving tribute to personality and character was made by one of his contemporaries:

To know Reginald Heber was to love him; he was of such a guileless and pure nature, so affectionate, so totally devoid of selfishness, so zealous and ardent in his aspirations after all that has a tendency to purify and elevate. He was singularly fitted for the high and important station he filled in the church by his learning, his eloquence, his zeal and devotion of himself to the cause of Christianity; by his personal purity and virtues; and above all, by the steadiness of his faith, which never wavered, either under the temptations of his intellect, or amidst the trials and seducements of the world!²

Reginald Heber, a friendly persuasive individual, was well

1 Smith, George - Bishop Heber. p.125.

2 Bonner, George - Memoir of the Life of Rgt.Rev.Reginald Heber, D.D. pp.155-156.

fitted to be a leader of men in the challenging task which awaited him in distant India. His former curate, the Rev. Martin Stow, writing to Augustus Hare, fervently commented,

The difficulties to be encountered in India are precisely those with which he is especially qualified to cope - obstinacy and prejudice on the one side, and notorious evil living on the other. He is in his own person the confusion of both.¹

The following four months were extremely busy ones for the Rector of Hodnet and Preacher of Lincoln's Inn, as he made preparations to leave his homeland. Before leaving for the term at London, he wrote to the Parish Clerk at Hodnet and arranged for the distribution of three wagon-loads of coal to the poor of the parish. The time was all too short for the farewells, the honours, and the duties, public and private, that he had to face. The University of Oxford conferred on him, by diploma, the degree of Doctor of Divinity, 10th February, 1823. The Fellows of All Souls requested him to allow his portrait to be painted that it might adorn their Hall. Conferences with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London engaged his time, and, in the midst of these activities, he received word that the Archdeacon of Calcutta, Dr. Loring, had survived Bishop Middleton by only two months. The need of reaching his diocese as soon as it could be arranged, was increased.

1 Hare, Augustus J.C. - Memorials of a Quiet Life.
Vol. I. p. 54.

He returned to Hodnet, where the short time which remained, previous to his final departure from the scenes of his youth and his mature years, was spent in making the necessary preparations for his long absence. At Malpas, he preached from the pulpit of his father's church for the first and last time, to the people who had known him in his youth, the most solemn of all his sermons, "On Time and Eternity". Mrs. Dod, Charlotte's mother, gave him this blessing:

Well, Reginald, (for I never can call you 'my Lord'), God be with you wherever you go. You have done much good at home, and if you ever effect half what you purpose for India, your name will be venerated there to the end of time. I owe you much, and you will always have my prayers for your welfare.¹

There was another, besides his mother and sister, who was to feel keenly the removal of the Hebers from the Hodnet Rectory. Maria Leycester had derived her chief home-pleasures from their society. She had become betrothed to the Rev. Martin Stow, Heber's former curate, before he took a chaplaincy post at Genoa, Italy. Reginald offered his Indian chaplaincy to Stow, which he gladly accepted, in the hope that Miss Leycester might consent to accompany him, and that her family would approve of the plans and give assent to their marriage. These high hopes of the young couple were fruitless. The parental permission was not granted. She committed her feelings to her

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II.
p.127.

journal as her world of love and happiness was being broken up.

The extreme suffering I felt on first hearing of the intended departures of the Hebers for India has now passed.

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The remembrance of the last two years rises up before me so much the more endeared from the thought that those happy days will never again return. There is nothing out of my own family which could have made so great a blank in my existence as this will do. For so many years they have been to me as brother and sister, giving to me so much pleasure, so much improvement. It will be the breaking up of my thoughts and habits and affections for years, scarcely can I bear to think that in a few months those whom I have loved so dearly will be removed from me far into another world - for such does India appear at this distance.¹

In the midst of the innumerable activities attendant upon his preparations for departure, he was subject to another pressure and he received his initiation in making diocesan decisions, even before he was consecrated as Bishop. A Chaplain in the East India Company's service, the Rev. Henry Shepherd, senior in point of service, was in England on furlough; and, with the news of the death of Bishop Middleton, he had proceeded to advance his name for consideration as Bishop; and, when that position was conferred upon Heber, he penned his letter to him seeking promotion to the vacant Archdeaconry. His action was also followed by that of another Chaplain who, while on furlough, was busy preparing for the future. To Shepherd, Heber wrote in a second letter, dated 19th March 1823

1 Smith, George - Bishop Heber. p.129.

I must, therefore abide by my former answer that I will make no promises till I arrive in India, though out of a desire to spare you further disappointment, I think it best to intimate that there is another individual on whom it is probable my choice will fall.

The same answer I have returned to Dr. Young, who has been recommended to me by some of my own relations and by one of my oldest and most esteemed friends.¹

Four days later Reginald wrote to his friend, John Thornton, thanking him for some information which he had requested, respecting the characters and qualifications of the several chaplains he was to find in Calcutta. In the letter he revealed the identity of the Chaplain he thought might be the best one for the Archdeaconry and discussed his reasons for his probable choice.² This letter shows some of the problems of personnel with which he was to be faced in the new Church organisation in India.

Thornton was also in correspondence with Amelia in those weeks. The inhabitants of the Hodnet parish had raised a subscription to present their loved pastor with a piece of plate, as a memorial of their respect and affection at his farewell service at the Church in April. One hundred and sixty contributions were received, ranging from a few pence to the guinea limit which had been set. For many it was a gift of

1 Liverpool Papers MS.38,411 FF 135-137 British Museum Vol.CCXXII East India Papers 1819-1824.

2 Vide Appendix 11. Heber on Calcutta Archdeaconry.

the "widow's mite"; for all it was a gift of love. £72 was raised and the committee had Mrs. Heber help them with the gift; and it was John whom she asked to make the purchase of the piece of plate. The engraved inscription read:

TO REGINALD HEBER, D.D.

This piece of plate is presented as a parting gift,
by his parishioners,
with the hope that it may remind him, in a far distant land,
of those, who will never cease to think of his virtues with affection,
and of his loss with regret.
A.D. 1823.¹

This and other expressions of goodwill caused Heber to exclaim, "I cannot help feeling ashamed of an affection which I have so imperfectly deserved!"

He spent his fortieth birthday with his mother, and family at Moreton, and, on the following day, 22nd April, he finally took leave of Shropshire.

The six weeks between Dr. Heber's arrival in London, and the moment of sailing, were occupied in obtaining information relative to his new duties, in attending the meetings of the religious societies connected with India, and in making the necessary preparations for his voyage. His last sermon at Lincoln's Inn was attended by the benchers and a large number of his other friends and well wishers. On the first of June, Reginald Heber, Rector of Hodnet, was consecrated the Bishop

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol. II. p. 125.

of Calcutta. His emotions regarding this sacred ceremony he described to Charlotte Dod, a week later,

The ceremony of my consecration was, as you may well believe a very awful and impressive one. Few persons were admitted to see it, but the Archbishop kindly invited my brother, and Mrs. Manners Sutton asked Emily, with leave to bring two friends, who were Mrs. Williams Wynn and Mrs. Thornton. The Archbishop read the service beautifully, and I was much affected. God grant that the feelings so excited may be permanent! When you read what I then undertook, by His help, to observe and do, you will not wonder that I was agitated.¹

The sermon preached on this occasion was by Arthur Bland Wrightson, Rector of Edlington, who took as his text, one which must have struck a note of reassurance to Reginald, 1 Timothy iii. 1, "This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a Bishop, he desireth a good work". His message emphasised the challenge of the thirty thousand British Christians living in India,

Engaged in pursuits of commerce, and intent upon amassing wealth or occupied with the duties of a military life, they stand eminently in need of the informing and correcting lessons of Scripture;

The Church was to make full proof of her ministry in maintaining Christianity among those who profess it, and in disseminating its saving truth among sixty millions of Heathens!

Persuasion was her only weapon. Again, a note of emphasis was

1 Smith, George - Bishop Heber. p.133.

placed upon his role as Bishop.

In the exercise, however, of the Episcopal Office in India, peculiar difficulties may be found. In the cause of extending the Gospel he may behold division of sentiment and contrariety of action.....much must be done for mutual conciliation, much for common interest.....a measure of Faith will be required as can remove the mountains of Idolatry and Superstition.¹

The Saturday following, the Lord Bishop of Calcutta was received in a private audience by His Majesty King George IV. Reginald wrote afterwards that on this occasion he was not "bustled or shy", and that he looked at him as attentively as he could do without incivility or disrespect to see whether he answered to the idea which he had previously formed of him. He had expected an older and more infirm man, but he found him "altogether looking like a hale man of eight and forty."²

One of his official duties in England was to preach a sermon in St. Paul's for the benefit of the London Charity School at the request of the S.P.C.K.; and this proved to be another memorable occasion. To Heber it was "the finest sight and sound" he ever saw or heard. He described a congregation estimated at seven thousand people which crowded the dome and the broad aisle of the church; an immense orchestra in front

1 Wrightson, A.B.- A Sermon preached in Lambeth Chapel, Sunday, June 1, 1823, at the Consecration of the Right Reverend Reginald Heber, D.D., Lord Bishop of Calcutta.

2 Smith, George - Bishop Heber. p.134.



T. Phillips R.A. pinx.

Edw. Haden sculp.

THE RIGHT HON. THE LORD BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

LORD BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

of the organ; a large choir (of the best Protestant singers in London) in surplices; and above five thousand boys and girls ranged in an amphitheatre all around, in uniform dresses, and packed so close, and ranged on so steep a declivity, that the whole looked like a tapestry of faces and clothes. On the 13th of June, he received the Valedictory Address of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, delivered by the Bishop of Bristol, in the presence of a large assemblage of the high dignitaries of the Church and members of the Society. In response to the address which eulogized the work of Bishop Middleton and commended his accomplishments to the care of the new Bishop, he responded with a short moving message, ending,

and, if ever the time should arrive when I may be enabled to preach to the natives of India in their own language, I shall then aspire to the still higher distinction of being considered the Missionary of the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge.¹

On the 16th June, 1823, the Bishop with his family, stood on the deck of the Thomas Grenville, as the ship slowly made its way against an adverse wind, waving their courageous farewells to the group of relatives and friends who had gone down to Ramsgate to see them sail. The Second Lord Bishop of Calcutta, then on his way to his distant diocese, was to be proven "a great and good man" in the service of the Church in India.

1 Kaye, Rgt.Rev.John - The Valedictory of the S.P.C.K., delivered by the Lord Bishop of Bristol, containing response by Reginald, Bishop of Calcutta. p.19.

Chapter Nine

SECOND LORD BISHOP OF CALCUTTA
1823-1826

Chapter Nine

SECOND LORD BISHOP OF CALCUTTA
1823-1826.

"And we must have danger, and fever, and pain,
 Ere we look on the white rocks of Albion again."

This prophetic couplet was penned by Reginald Heber underneath one of the sketches which he drew of the white cliffs of Dover as the Thomas Grenville, East Indiaman, sailed steadily away from England. The Hebers faced the long voyage to India with mixed feelings. It would be many years before they could see the members of their families and their many friends. Yet they had counted the cost before making the decision to go, and were looking forward eagerly to the experience which lay ahead. As the fading shore of England became enveloped in mist Reginald could not help realising

how much I am, hereafter, to depend on myself my own resources, and my own judgment; how far I am removed from those whose partial friendship excused my faults, and whose candid judgment might correct them; and that, with a more than usual fondness for society, I have left behind me such a society both in intellect, acquirement, urbanity and regard to myself, as I cannot by any possibility hope to meet with elsewhere.¹

For their twenty-seven month old little girl, the sea voyage was a trip filled with strange and new experiences. It was not long before she had made acquaintance, as her father

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II.
 p.143.

described it, "with almost every creature in the ship from the Captain to the cows, calves and poultry." With their fellow passengers, the Hebers considered themselves fortunate, "the seniors being respectable and well informed, and the juniors quiet and studious."

The Thomas Grenville, a small ship of 923 tons register, belonging to the East India Company fleet of merchantmen, carried a nominal crew of 107 members and 26 guns,¹ provided satisfactory accommodations for the Hebers and the fifty or more passengers. Her Captain, a Mr. Manning, proved to be a modest, gentlemanly, and conscientious man, with whom Heber became well acquainted before their nearly sixteen week ocean voyage came to an end at the mouth of the Hooghly river in India. The Commanders were especially required "to keep up the worship of Almighty God" on board their ships every Sunday, when circumstances admitted. Captain Manning was happy to accept the Bishop's offer to read evening prayers regularly in the cuddy after tea, and to conduct a worship service on Sundays. Reginald's "Journal" entry, for the first Sunday of the voyage, reveals the attractive arrangement for the service which prevailed when the weather allowed,

June 22. - This day, being Sunday, the decks were all beautifully clean, having been well scrubbed on Saturday-night. The awning was spread over the quarter-deck, and the capstan

1 Lindsay, W.S. - History of Merchant Shipping, Vol.II. p.577.

and sides of the vessel concealed and ornamented with flags of different nations. Chairs were set for the officers and passengers on the poop and round the afterpart of the deck, and spars laid across the remainder as seats for the sailors, who attended church in clean shirts and trousers, and well washed and shaved. In the space between the capstan and half-deck was a small table set for me and the purser, who acted as clerk, and I read prayers, and preached one of my Hodnet Sermons slightly altered, to a very attentive and orderly congregation, of altogether, I should think, 140 persons. The awning made really a handsome church, and the sight was a very pleasing one.¹

Other Sundays did not always offer such pleasant conditions for the ship church service. On one Sunday he found sea-knees were necessary, as well as sea-legs, since,

the vessel was so much on one side, that, while kneeling on a chair, (which I was obliged to do rather than on the deck, in order that my congregation might hear me), I had some difficulty in keeping either myself or my fulcrum from going to leeward.²

He proved to be a good sailor, despite a good deal of contrary weather, and a full allowance of the noble game of pitch and toss; and between the various occupations of reading, writing, walking the quarter-deck, watching the flying-fish, and learning Hindustani and Persian, he did not experience any of the vacuity of time, of which he had been apprehensive. He lacked exercise, feeling that pacing the deck was nothing, and

1 Heber, Reginald - Indian Journal, Vol.1, p.XIX.

2 Ibid. p.XXVI.

he envied the young cadets running up and down the shrouds. A pair of dumb-bells he had offered but slight opportunity for exercise, for as he wrote Wilmot,

I cannot use them in my cabin without endangering my wife and child, and have not as yet reconciled myself to exhibiting them on deck, or among the hen coops.

The schedule of meals on shipboard was a full one,

a breakfast of cold ham, mutton chops, or broiled herrings; renew the war at twelve with biscuit, cheese and beer, dine at three in a very substantial manner, tea it and toast it at six, and conclude the day at nine with a fresh lading of biscuit and cheese, and a good tumbler of grog or wine and water.¹

The regularity of life at sea Heber found favourable for study, and several of the passengers joined the Bishop and his wife in the study of the Hindustani and Persian languages.

The monotony of the restricted life was broken by their watching shoals of porpoises, and the abundance of flying fish and various birds which followed the ship for days at a time; a grampus, sunfish, dolphins, and even a shark and a whale were sighted. The crossing of the equator was appropriately observed, with the seamen making extensive arrangements ahead of time. The line was crossed on 26th July, and much of the day was spent in the mummeries usual on such occasions, which Heber reported went off very well and in good-humour. He

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II. p.151.

expressed himself as:

a good deal surprised at the contrivance exhibited by the masqueraders, in dressing out (with the help of a little oakum and paint, a few fish-skins and decayed finery) the various characters of Neptune, Amphitrite, Mercury, Triton, etc., with far more attention to classical costume ¹

than he had expected. The Bishop had become well acquainted with many of the members of the crew during their trip, as he had shown a great interest in their duties and their welfare.

Among the passengers he found a destitute servant who had been in Persia with Sir Gore Ouseley, and was returning to India. With his usual kindness, the Bishop engaged him, feeling that,

the condition of a converted native is, too often, a very trying one, shunned by his own countrymen, and discountenanced and distrust-
ed by the Europeans; while many of them are disposed to fling themselves entirely on the charity of their converters, and expect, without doing anything for themselves, that they who have baptized should keep them. Such may be the character of Daniel Abdullah. He is, however, now a legitimate object of compassion.²

Daniel was given a post of importance, but not much trust, among the staff of the Bishop's servants in India. His irreclaimable habits of drunkenness finally resulted, two years later, in his discharge, after many broken promises he

1 Heber, Reginald - Indian Journal, Vol.1, p.XXVII.

2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II.
p.151.

had made of reform. Even then, the Bishop saw that he was established in a position where he would be well watched.

The long, tedious voyage passed nearly without serious accident, but on a morning of the last week, the Bishop's calm was shattered when he heard a cry, "Davy is overboard." Thinking the cry had been, "the baby", he rushed to the mizen chains in a sort of confused agony, tugging at his coat-buttons and his sleeves as he went, with the intention of leaping in after her. There, he found that one of the young cadets had fallen from the mizen-gaff and knocked over one of the midshipmen; both had gone overboard. Only one was rescued.

On the evening of 3rd October, the merchant vessel anchored in Saugor Roads, where the Hooghly river empties into the Bay of Bengal. The trip up the river to Calcutta, one hundred miles away, was made by the Hebers on the Government yacht which had been sent down to meet them. On it, were: Mr. Mill, the Principal of the Bishop's College, which had been a great dream of Bishop Middleton; and with him, was Mr. Corrie, one of the Senior Chaplains, then resident in Calcutta, who had been appointed as co-chaplain in charge of the ecclesiastical affairs following the death of the first Bishop and the first Archdeacon. The welcoming committee were understandably eager to meet their new superior, of whom they had heard so much, and to deliver into his possession a collection of ecclesiastical communications awaiting his immediate attention.

He first stepped ashore in India at a small native

village near Fulta where the yacht was becalmed. His first recorded impression expresses his poetic and missionary feeling.

I never recollect having more powerfully felt the beauty of similar objects. The greenhouse-like smell and temperature of the atmosphere which surrounded us, the exotic appearance of the plants and of the people, the verdure of the fields, the dark shadows of the trees, and the exuberant and neglected vigour of the soil, teeming with life and food, neglected, as it were, out of pure abundance, would have been striking under any circumstances; they were still more so to persons just landed from a three months' voyage; and to me, when associated with the recollection of the objects which have brought me out to India, the amiable manners and countenances of the people, contrasted with the symbols of their foolish and polluted idolatry now first before me, impressed me with a very solemn and earnest wish that I might in some degree, however small, be enabled to conduce to the spiritual advantage of creatures so goodly, so gentle, and now so misled and blinded.¹

On October 10th, the Hebers finally reached Calcutta and were driven in a carriage procession to Fort William, where they had been assigned a temporary residence by the Governor. Here another group of the clergy of the Church awaited them; one of whom, Chaplain Parsons, had been an older student when Heber, as a small lad, had first gone away to school at Whitchurch. The clergy were followed by a still larger group - the servants! Each was introduced under his respective duty-name.

1 Heber, Reginald - Indian Journal, Vol.I. p.13.

The fact that the group of servants outnumbered the assembled clergy impressed no one as being incongruous.

The next day, Bishop Heber was driven to Government House where he was presented to Lord Amherst; after the presentation he went to the Cathedral of St. John, where he was installed. That evening they dined at Government-house, with the bearded and turbaned waiters making a striking appearance for the newly arrived English residents. The Bishop's "Journal" gives us very little information about his first appearance in the pulpit of the Cathedral on the following morn:

October 12. This was Sunday. I preached
and we had a good congregation.¹

The church of St. John was the second of that name in Calcutta; The first had been used for forty years before being destroyed in the Mohammedan sack of the city, the year before the battle of Plassey. The cathedral church of Heber was founded in 1784 by Warren Hastings, and opened three years later by Lord Cornwallis, having been dedicated to St. John by a special act of consecration sent out by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The interior Heber described as,

elegant, paved with marble, and furnished
with very large and handsome glass chandeliers
....., with a light pulpit, with chairs on
one side of the chancel for the Governor-General
and his family, and on the other for the Bishop
and Archdeacon.² The altar-piece of "The Last

1 Ebid. p.24.

2 Ibid. p.24.

Supper" was painted by Sir John Zoffany.¹

Bishop Heber's Indian career began and ended during the Governor-Generalship of Lord Amherst, a man socially agreeable, but not of the same stature and ability as many of the distinguished governors of India. He was perhaps unfortunate in succeeding so great a statesman as Lord Hastings. The defeat of the Maharattas by Lord Hastings had completed the establishment of British supremacy over the whole of India, south-east of the Indus and Sutlej.

The realisation of the fact that Britain was now responsible for the government of all India led men to take a new view of the functions of government. It helped to give birth to new political aims and a new and deeper sense of responsibility for the welfare of the Indian peoples.²

This new feeling which had germinated in the writings of the brothers, Wellesley, and in the thought of Lord William Bentinck, as Governor of Madras in 1804, was to be found growing in the decade of the "20's". The development of the new methods and ideas was in part stimulated by the Liberal movement in Europe. It also owed very much to the remarkable group of scholar-statesmen who were in the service of the East India Company during that generation. Sir John Malcolm, Sir Thomas Munro, Mountstuart Elphinstone, and Sir Charles Metcalfe,

1 Zoffany, Sir John (1733-1810), the German favourite of the Georges II and III, resided in Calcutta for fourteen years. This painting gave great offence to one of the citizens, whose head he copied for that of Judas Iscariot.

2 Muir, Ramsay - Making of British India, p.276.

all left the impress of their characters upon Indian history. Heber shared this feeling and attitude toward the problems of India; and, in his travels around his huge diocese, he made extensive comments and reports upon conditions as he found them, to Lord Amherst at Calcutta.

Lord Amherst, who had preceded Heber to India by a few months, had come to that high and important position through a strange chain of events. His failure to measure up to his challenging opportunity may be, in part, blamed upon the misfortune of Fate. Lord Hastings had resigned his office in 1821, but did not actually lay down his functions until January 1823. George Canning, brilliant orator and statesman, who had been President of the Board of Control of the Affairs in India, was appointed to succeed him. Before he left England, however, the suicide of Lord Castlereagh opened to him the office of Foreign Secretary and the leadership of the House of Commons, and he gave up his Indian appointment. The Company Directors, after considering the claims of Lord William Bentinck, nominated Lord Amherst, who had shown firmness and restraint on an abortive mission to China. A capable official in a subordinate capacity, he lacked the necessary qualities for the Governor-Generalship. His reign was marked, primarily, by the first Burmese War which was wantonly provoked by the King of Ava. The two year campaign which followed was one of the most expensive and least successful in the Company's history. In the meantime, various minor disturbances had been caused

throughout India by the conviction that the British would be defeated in Burma. When the Bishop made his first long tour through the Upper Provinces, he found his appearance was of some service in reassuring men's minds of the calm stability of English rule.

In political aspect, Heber's Indian years were charged with war on the eastern border and an uneasy atmosphere within the vast dominion. The condition of religious life within his new diocese failed to exhibit the peace and prosperity one might expect; warring factions divided the young Church in India. The quarrels, of the Evangelicals and the High Churchmen, and between the Church and the Dissenters, which had been transplanted from England, were augmented by the strained relations existing between the Company Chaplains and the missionaries. To these were added the racial problems peculiar to India - caste distinction, and new generations of Anglo-Indians. The newly arrived Bishop had no opportunity to survey his task and to become adjusted to his strange surroundings before being called upon to make important ecclesiastical decisions.

His first eight months in residence made great demands upon his mind and spirit. The sudden death of Archdeacon Loring, only two months after the death of Bishop Middleton, had meant that the Church in India was to exist for over a year before a new Bishop could arrive to assume direction of its work. The Bengal government had appointed Chaplains Corrie and Parsons to perform the episcopal duties, in so far

as they lawfully could, in that necessary interval. Their failure to understand the powers conferred on the bishops of Calcutta in the first letters patent, or their hesitancy to act to that extent, caused them to decline to act on many points.

The consequence was, that the chief affairs of the diocese had been, for some months prior to Bishop Heber's arrival, nearly suspended; and thus, besides many references and papers which were necessarily left for his decision, a great pressure of business was unfortunately occasioned, at a moment when he required much leisure to consider the various difficulties of his situation, and the peculiar circumstances under which he was placed.¹

In trying to reconstruct in imagination the situation in which the second Lord Bishop of Calcutta found himself, one cannot overlook the personality and attitude of his predecessor, Dr. Middleton, when elected to the bishopric was, as we have previously indicated, a staunch leader of the High Churchmen, in England. A man of many talents, a vigorous priest and thorough scholar, his selection as the first bishop of the newly established Church in India met general approval, even from disappointed Evangelicals who had hoped the post would go to one having a larger sympathy for their interests. In going to his field of service, Middleton did not go out, as Heber, a chief missionary to the East; but he went out to govern an established Christian Church which primarily served the English

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II. p.153.

people, military and civilian, living in India. He conceived that his situation and his authority would have undergone no essential change, even if the design of spreading the Gospel among the Hindus had been abandoned by all parties. So long as there should remain in India a community of persons already professing the Christian religion, so long would the presence of a bishop be required for its spiritual superintendence and government. Bishop Middleton laboured to establish the necessary separation of Church administration from missionary supervision, as the only wise basis on which the first bishop should work. Basically, the problem was a High Churchman's attitude toward the enthusiastic missionary endeavours of the Evangelicals. Le Bas stated in his biography, that for Bishop Middleton,

to merge the pastoral in the missionary character would therefore, be no less than, virtually, to desert the station which he was expressly appointed to maintain, and to change it for other ground, which would afford him no appropriate or distinct position.¹

His foundation of Bishop's College was a definite expression of the encouragement which he sought to give to the work of missions on a level of expression which he best understood and could share.

A letter, written by one in a high official position at

1 Le Bas, Charles W. - Life of Thomas Fanshaw Middleton, D.D., Vol.II. p.338.

Calcutta, immediately following the death of the Bishop, supports this interpretation of his work:

In the discharge of his public functions he has conducted himself with excellent judgment, sobriety, good sense, and moderation; by one class of persons, who anticipated from him immediate and decided exertions for the conversion of the natives, he is considered to have been lukewarm in the cause of truth, and not to have sufficiently supported the labours of the missionaries. But, as far as I can judge, he pursued, soberly and zealously, the only course calculated to accomplish the object in question.¹

This considered course of the first Bishop might have been more successful if he had not been hampered by what the writer of the above mentioned letter referred to as "a defect in his character" which unfortunately weakened his influence.

His high notions of his office, led to the assumption of a formal and rather haughty manner; and he was in consequence, thought pompous, repulsive, and too acutely alive to any supposed want of respect on the part of others.²

This attitude was noted by many in Bombay as well as in Calcutta. For a man, in personality and character, more completely opposite to this, no one better than Reginald Heber could have been selected. His unassuming, eager interest in every worthwhile activity to advance the work of the Christian religion was to prove a catalytic agent upon the diverse elements of the Church and the Community.

1 Ibid. p.341.

2 Ibid. p.342.

Bishop Heber's length of service in his diocese was to be limited by his sudden, tragic death to less than three years. In such a brief span of time he was to make a tremendous vital impact upon the life of the Church and of India. To appreciate the significant contribution which he made to Christianity in India, one should not seek for church or school buildings that were then erected, or ponder statistics indicating growth during that period. Heber's contribution was of an intangible nature - a new spirit of conciliation, which drew men together in the love of Christ. The re-vitalized hope and faith animating the Church and its Ministry, permeated the life of the Community through its leaders. To the weak, divided establishment, he gave a sense of direction which had been missing previously. The inspiration of his example was to live with them and encourage them in the period of uncertainty¹ which followed his death and before a sturdy, lasting episcopal rule was established in the Church of India.

The first of the many ecclesiastical affairs which engaged his attention provides an illustration of the manner in which Heber was to invoke his episcopal power. Some clergy in England had wondered if he would have the necessary strength of spirit to act, as a bishop might have need to do. The

1 Bishop Heber was succeeded by Bishop John T. James (1786-1828) and by Bishop John M. Turner (1786?-1831). Neither Bishop resisted the rigors of the Indian climate as long as had Heber.

answer is found in his handling of the "Chaplain Davies - Archdeacon Barnes dispute". Mr. Davies, as Senior Chaplain at Bombay, contrary to Bishop Middleton's injunction, had refused the Archdeacon the right to preach on Sundays other than those mentioned in the regulations. The Company's ecclesiastical commissioners had declined to rule on the appeal, deferring decision until the arrival of the new Bishop. Heber resolved the difference in a masterly exchange of letters to the principals, resting the obedience of the Chaplain on his ordination oath and urging that obedience on him; and, at the same time, conceding the possibility of re-modelling the former regulation in a manner more convenient to all parties. The conclusion of Heber's letter to Davies reveals his spirit of conciliation at work in behalf of the Church:

But, in the meantime, and on the grounds which I have stated, I entreat you, as your fellow-labourer in the Lord, as your spiritual father (however unworthy the name) I advise, exhort and admonish you, that you no longer seek to narrow the usefulness, and impede the labours of your brother, - that you no longer continue to offer to the heathen, and those who differ from our Church, the spectacle of a Clergy divided among themselves, and a minister in opposition to his spiritual superiors; but that you recall your unguarded words; that you recollect your ordination engagement; and even if you are still unconvinced as to the full extent of the claims which your archdeacon and your diocesan possess over you, that you would be ready to abandon for the sake of peace some little of your supposed independence, and rather endure a wrong than violate a charity.¹

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II. p.167.

It is most difficult for modern readers to envisage such a condition once existing in the Church of India, where a Chaplain would act in such a manner toward the Archdeacon; but, this case indicates the need of adjustment existing within the established Church, after its ten years of existence.

Perhaps the most pressing of decisions for Heber to make was his selection of the Archdeacon, which position had been vacant following the death of Archdeacon Loring soon after the passing of Bishop Middleton. He had been under considerable pressure, before sailing, from two Chaplains who were at home on furlough. His attitude was that no decision would be made before he reached Calcutta; and then, according to the terms of his patent, which he understood to limit the choice from clergy then resident and on duty in British India, he would make a choice. His caution proved to be wise. He had half-decided to elevate Chaplain Hawtayne to that position, in view of his experience, and association as his predecessor's Chaplain. This selection he viewed, at first, with favour upon meeting his clergy and surveying the diocesan problems:

I was still more (I confess) biased towards Hawtayne because I soon found that I should find it necessary to depart in some pretty essential points from the system of policy pursued by my predecessor and I was anxious, therefore, by preferring his Chaplain and carrying into effect, therefore, his known intentions in his favour - to clear myself

from any suspicion of personal disrespect
towards his memory.¹

The only other possibility, as the Bishop viewed it, was Chaplain Corrie,² who, with Parsons, had carried the burden of the office in so far as it could be done, until the new episcopal successor should arrive. As ranking Senior Chaplain, he had served faithfully, with distinction, for seventeen years in the Company's Chaplaincy in India. His piety, devotion and untiring zeal were well known in Calcutta. Heber had gone as far as indicating to Hawtayne his probable decision; but, at the last moment, he learned further details concerning Corrie which caused him to ask Hawtayne to release him from his conditional promise, which the latter did "very handsomely".³ Corrie was made Archdeacon. This position he held and performed to Heber's steadily increasing satisfaction. Hawtayne later became Archdeacon of Bombay.

One of the first projects of the diocese which engaged the full attention of Reginald Heber was Bishop's College. He undertook the management of everything connected with it, and assumed, as visitor, the power of inspecting its internal arrangements. The exterior had been completed before the

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- 1 Thornton Collection - MS. unnumbered, dated Jan 9, 1824.
 - 2 Chaplain Daniel Corrie (1777-1837) Cambridge M.A., entered East India Company Chaplaincy 1806. A friend of the Rev. David Brown, and of the Rev. Henry Martyn.
 - 3 Vide Appendix 12 - Heber's Letter to Thornton.

death of its founder but the work on the interior had been hampered by a lack of funds. When Heber arrived the grounds of the College, near the Botanical Gardens, were still undrained marshland, with wide, open stagnant pools and dense jungle undergrowth all contributing to an unhealthy situation. Within a few months, the principal professor, Mr. Mill, and his family took up their residence in the College; and, with his devoted assistance, it was possible to open it to the first four pupils and a missionary, Mr. Tweddle, who had arrived.

The chapel was still unfinished; but Divine Services were held in the library, a long and handsome room, filled up with stalls, like the Bodleian Library at Oxford. Besides the residents, several neighbouring families, and a very respectable congregation from Howrah, an adjoining town¹

The grounds, which had been drained and landscaped, were increased by an additional sixty acres which the Bishop obtained from the Company. The development of this project was uppermost in Heber's mind; but the great separation, in distance and time, from England caused some of the members of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to entertain the idea that the Bishop was not sufficiently interested in the completion of the project.² Nothing was further from the truth, but lack of funds seriously hampered the building

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II. p.172.
 2 British Critic, Vol.IV. 1828, p.217.

programme; it was through Bishop Heber's efforts that funds for the College were raised at Calcutta, Bombay, and Colombo; and strong support for the work was enlisted throughout the diocese. The purposes for which it was designed, and which it fulfilled in the span of its history were four:

1. Instruction of native and other Christian youth in the doctrines and discipline of the Church to prepare them as preachers, catechists, and schoolmasters.
2. Teaching a thorough educational course in secular subjects, including English.
3. Translation of the Scriptures, the Liturgy, and moral and religious tracts into native languages.
4. A hostel for missionaries arriving in India for the first time.¹

Bishop's College, founded by Bishop Middleton, was firmly established through the efforts of Bishop Heber, and to these two men it owed a debt of gratitude for its life.

A second accomplishment of churchmanship by Bishop Heber was arranging that the missionaries sent to India by the Church Missionary Society be licensed by him and placed "under his immediate jurisdiction, in common with the other clergy of his diocese". This unification of forces under one leadership was sorely needed. Before Bishop Middleton left England in 1814, the Societies for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign

1 Le Bas, Charles W. - Life of Thomas Fanshaw Middleton, D.D., Vol.II, p.18.

Parts, and for Promoting Christian Knowledge, had each placed its missionaries under his direction. Neither Society was as vigorous in pursuing a missionary programme as was the Church Missionary Society, sponsored by the Evangelicals; and its missionaries were not under the license of the Bishop. The first bishop had come out to India to supervise an established English Church, not primarily to promote the evangelization of the natives. During his episcopate he was vexed and tried by the failure of the Company to build up its Chaplain strength, in fact, few new ones arrived even to supplement those who were returning to England on furlough. After six years, he faced a situation wherein the representatives of the Church Missionary Society were arriving at a faster rate than the licensed clergy under his direction. He realised that he "must either license them, or silence them"; there was no alternative. As he wrote home to Mr. Norris,

If I license them to preach in English, that were at once to acknowledge these men as performing the duties of parochial clergy, and that the Company need not send chaplains to India; and if I should forbid them to preach in English, while so many European congregations are without any pastor, it would excite horror and hatred both of my person and my office.¹

The good Bishop was caught on the horns of a dilemma and, to his way of thinking, he could not run the risk of licensing

1 Ibid. p.402.

the missionaries whom the Evangelicals were sending out in an increasing number.

As a mere lad, Reginald Heber had not hesitated to face the pointed horns of a live bull; and, to him, the problem of licensing the missionaries was not one to cause him to turn aside. His conception of the role of a bishop in a heathen country was a larger one. His churchmanship embraced not only those who had heard the message of Christ but also those who were outside the Church and had never had the opportunity of hearing it. The hymn which he had penned four years before expressed his conviction:

From Greenland's icy mountains,
From India's coral strand,
Where Afric's sunny fountains
Roll down their golden sand;
From many an ancient river,
From many a palmy plain,
They call us to deliver
Their land from error's chain!

Can we, whose souls are lighted
With Wisdom from on high,
Can we to men benighted
The lamp of life deny?
Salvation! oh, Salvation!
The joyful sound proclaim,
Till each remotest nation
Has learn'd Messiah's name!¹

Here in Heber was the passionate nature of an evangel. In the months prior to leaving the Hodnet parish, he had considered some of the problems he would have to conquer in the larger

1 Heber, Reginald - Hymns Written and Adapted to the
Weekly Church Service of the Year,
p.139.

parish overseas, and the advantages of licensing the missionaries he considered great, for the Church, for the missionaries, and for the people of India. When he approached the Church Missionary Society, he found them desirous of having their missionaries placed under the same episcopal authority as their brethren in the East.¹ From the King's Advocate, whose opinion he solicited, and from the President and the other members of the India Board, agreement was forthcoming, that, by the terms of the patent, "all clergymen of the Church of England employed in any ministry within the diocese of Calcutta are subject to the bishop's authority." By careful advance planning, the battle was more than half won. Chaplains of the Company, and missionaries sent out by each of the three Church Societies could be effectively unified under the episcopal direction of the Bishop of Calcutta. A long stride forward in the interest of efficient church organization and work was ready to be taken when Heber reached India.

In Calcutta, on December 2nd, a meeting of the local branch of the Church Missionary Society, which had invited him to become its President, provided him with the opportunity to have introduced a resolution, "that every missionary of the Society should, on his arrival in Bengal, wait on the Bishop

1 One Hundred Years: Being the Short History of the Church Missionary Society, p. 50.

for his license".

All the clergy present, including the missionaries, one chaplain alone excepted, were unanimous for its adoption; but the greater part of the lay members vehemently opposed it.¹

The basis of disagreement was fear of loss of their independence, which the Evangelicals thought the High Church party would effect, through episcopal supervision. The motion was lost, for the missionaries, who were in favour of it, had no vote. It was agreed by many who had opposed the resolution that it should stand as a bye-law of the committee. This was acceptable to the Bishop, for he recognised that with the missionaries themselves on the side of the Church discipline (as the ones likely to be affected by it) he had no fear but that a really sound and apostolical discipline could be revived and established. He disclosed the fine spirit which had motivated his handling of the difficult session in a letter, written the following day, to the Rev. Principal Mill, who had supported the resolution.

Many allowances, you know as well as I do, must be made for the peculiar circumstances of India, the novelty of episcopal authority in these countries, and the suspicion, arising from an ignorance of its real nature, with which every claim made by that authority is regarded by those laymen who made up the majority of yesterday's debate. With all such it seems to be my business to proceed calmly; from all such to bear as much as I am justified in doing

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II.
p.175.

till by a diligent discharge of my more popular duties, I can obtain a patient hearing for my unpopular claims, and prove, as I verily believe I shall be able to do, how much these claims have been misunderstood and misrepresented.¹

This was his attitude, the secret of his success, as the prime conciliator of the Church in India. Like a commander in the field, with limited resources, he had strategically marshalled his clergy for the attack on the forces of evil, of indifference, and of idolatry. He did not bemoan his limited numbers of clergy, but he sought to increase them. He might well have protested, with justice, the inadequacy of the numbers of clergy available, and then have felt it was the responsibility of the Company and the Church at home to remedy the situation. And he did write appeals to the Company (of a quota of 28 Chaplains for Bengal, only 13 were then available), to the Church, and to the Societies for more clergymen; but he didn't stop with that. The move to license the missionaries of the Church Missionary Society increased the number of ministers available as temporary substitutes when the vacancies caused by illness or death occurred. Bishop Heber's "Charge to the Clergy of the Diocese", delivered at Calcutta on 27th May, 1824,² was aimed at a dual congregation. The first, composed of the clergy before him, the Chaplains of the East India Company,

1 Ibid. p.177.

2 Also delivered at Bombay, 29th April, 1825; at Colombo, 1st September, 1825; and at Madras, 10th March, 1826.

and the missionaries sent out by the S.P.C.K., the S.P.G. and the C.M.S.; the other, the larger Church audience seven thousand miles away in England. In this charge, to the first group, he encouraged, conciliated, and congratulated them on their response to the challenge of the task confronting them; to those at home, who were to read his report, he sought to win their active support and to enlist volunteers for the ministry of the young Church in this ancient country. In his appraisal of the people of India and their response to the Gospel, he valiantly defended the Church and the missionary endeavour from the attack made on them by Abbé Dubois, a French missionary.¹ In answer to the charge that no converts had been made to Protestant Christianity, he directed attention to the Christians of Agra, of Benares, of Buxar, of Meerut, and Chunar!

Bear witness those numerous believers of our own immediate neighbourhood, who, though we differ on many, and doubtless on very important points, I should hate myself if I could regard as any other than my brethren.

Continuing in his discourse, he mentioned the populous Christian districts of the Carnatic and Tanjore to bear witness; and also Ceylon.

And let him, finally, bear witness whom we have now received into the number of the commissioned servants of the Church, and whom, we trust, at no distant day, to send

1 A detailed "Reply to the letters of the Abbé Dubois on The State of Christianity in India", was made by the Rev. James Hough, E.I.Co. Chaplain of Madras.

forth, in the fulness of Christian authority, to make known the way of truth to those his countrymen from whose errors he has himself been gloriously delivered.¹

In this passage, Bishop Heber alluded to the ordination of Christian David, a Tamil, the first native Christian minister in the English Church of India.

In his letter to Wynn later on the same day, he described that important service in the history of the young Church.

I held my first visitation this morning at six o'clock, to avoid the heat of the day. We had the first fruits of the Gentile Church in India, in the person of Christian David, a black catechist in Ceylon, and a pupil of the celebrated Schwartz, whom, at the desire of Sir Edward Barnes,² I admitted to Deacon's orders.³

The native ministry of the Church in India began with this consecration by Bishop Heber of the Tamil convert who had journeyed to Calcutta, via Madras, to receive his ordination. Within a year from that historic occasion, Heber expressed his conviction that the conversion of India would be best accomplished by the agency of natives of the country; and that the time had almost been reached, when it would be no longer desirable to incur the considerable expense of sending out missionaries from Europe.

Bishop Heber was energetic in the promotion of the work of the Societies in England by participating in the programmes of local committees. Mention has been made of his connection

1 Heber, Reginald - Sermons Preached in India, p.22.

2 Sir Edward Barnes, (1776-1838), Lt.Gen. and Governor of Ceylon.

3 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II. p.336.

with the Church Missionary Society Association as President; and he held the same office for the Diocesan Committee of the Christian Knowledge Society of Calcutta. Another Society, which early sought his patronage, was the Calcutta Auxiliary Bible Society. This branch of the British and Foreign Bible Society had been organized for three years, when the first Bishop came to Calcutta. Branches at Colombo and Bombay also had been formed prior to 1814. Bishop Middleton, in England, had not favoured the work of that Society, preferring the much more venerable Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and, at a special meeting of that group before he sailed, he was made a presentation of £1,000 to assist him in the work of his diocese. When he reached Calcutta and was invited to join the younger Bible Society, which embraced many of the leading men of the community, it caused no little surprise when he declined. As a High Churchman, he could not see himself associated with that group, in his position; and he had proceeded to form a diocesan committee of the S.P.C.K.¹ However, Reginald Heber, it will be recalled, had for many years actively supported the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in his parish; and, when the Calcutta Auxiliary invited him to become its Episcopal Patron, he accepted without hesitation, interested

1 Le Bas, Charles W. - Life of Thomas Fanshaw Middleton, D.D. Vol.I., p.148.

to share in its programme. He heartily gave his support to the cause of Bible distribution in India as he had done at home.¹ The only one of the major Church Societies not functioning in India was the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and this Society Heber was to organize at Bombay, during his visitation to that city, and in Calcutta, upon his return.

Another phase of activity which engaged the keen interest of the Bishop, from the beginning, was the educational programme of the "native female schools". Mrs. Wilson, wife of a missionary of the Church Missionary Society, had performed what many held to be an impossible task by developing a system of girls' schools, twenty-three in number, in and around Calcutta. Each school had twenty-five or thirty girls in attendance. The Bishop, enthusiastically describing this project in a letter to his father-in-law, stated,

The difficulties of Mrs. Wilson's undertaking, and the wonders she has brought about, will be better understood when I mention, that two years ago, no single female native in Bengal could either write, read, or sew, that the notion of teaching them these things, or sending them to schools where they ran the risk of mixing with, and touching those of different castes, was, at first, regarded in about the same light as it would be in England to send a girl to learn tumbling and rope-dancing at Sadler's Wells.²

1 Brown, George - History of the British and Foreign Bible Society, Vol.II, p.131.

2 Heber, Reginald - Indian Journal, Vol.II, p.301.

Emily Heber, with several of the ladies of the community, formed a committee to assist as "lady governesses". The Bishop gained the promise of Lady Amherst to be patroness for the school, and his work behind-the-scenes is indicated in this excerpt from a letter to Mrs. Charles Lushington:¹

and I am extremely anxious to concentrate in the assisting committee, as much as possible of the rank, influence, and good sense, as well as benevolence of Calcutta. May I hope that you will permit me to add your name to the list?

The liberal attitude toward secular education held by the Bishop and Mrs. Wilson concerning these "native female schools" is revealed in the following statement of explanation:

The object, you are aware, of the institution, will not be to attempt in any direct way the making converts, but to give to as many of the Indian females as possible, an education of a useful and moral character; to enable them to read the Scriptures; and to leave them, in short, in such a state of mental cultivation as will enable them in after life to choose their religion for themselves.²

The education of children in the diocese formed one of the keenest interests of Bishop Heber during his visitations at all times. Later, a central school for Mrs. Wilson's classes was built from plans drawn by the Bishop, who once more engaged in the delight of architectural sketching, as he had

1 Her husband was Charles Lushington (1785-1866), Civil Servant in the East India Company in charge of ecclesiastical affairs at Calcutta.

2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol. II. pp. 186-7.

done at Hodnet.

In addition to handling the voluminous details of the administration of the affairs of his huge diocese of British India, to which the continent of Australia was added in 1824, he was charged with the completion of Bishop's College, and with the oversight of the activities of the respective Church Societies. Added to all this, his interest in the work of the native schools, and his desire to contribute his services, as much as he could, in the scarcity of chaplains in the Bengal presidency, led to his performing, himself, as much or more duty than he had done in England. When his wife remonstrated with him about his driving himself at such a steady pace, he would answer that the more zealous he was in the discharge of his duties, the more he could, with the greater justice, urge activity on such of his clergy as he might deem deficient. In this early period of his Calcutta residence, he had not been able to settle his family into comfortable living surroundings, as he had desired. The Company, according to the terms of the Act passed on 11th July, 1823, was to supply a house and defray the expenses of his visitations.¹ This he had requested and had been promised before leaving England, but the red tape of official procedure and the long sea route of travel delayed the arrival of the necessary instructions enabling the Bishop

1 Statutes at Large, 4. George IV C.71 Pr.1-6, p.308.

to undertake to rent, or to purchase a home, both of which were extremely expensive. During the first few weeks of living in the temporary home provided for them through the kindness of Lord Amherst, within the confines of Fort William, it was discovered that the little Emily's health was being affected adversely. The accomplished Superintendent of the Botanic Garden, Dr. Wallich, came to their rescue by offering a charming home which he owned at Tittyghur, on the left bank of the Hooghly, below the Governor-General's park at Barrackpore, twenty miles from Calcutta. The new temporary home proved beneficial and enjoyable for the Hebers, in the best time of the year.

His "Journal" for the 25th of January has recorded in it an event in the life of the happy home:

On my return from Calcutta this morning, where I went to preach at the Cathedral, I found that I had a fresh reason for thankfulness to God in my wife's safety, and the birth of a fine and promising little girl, to the exceeding delight of our dear Emily, who rejoices in her new plaything,.....¹

On 21st April, Reginald Heber celebrated his forty-first birthday, and, on the same day, he christened their new child, Harriet. In the evening a dinner party was given with the Governor and Lady Amherst and nearly all of their Calcutta

1 Heber, Reginald - Indian Journal, Vol.I. p.59.

acquaintances present. His gracious hospitality was extended to several of the wealthy natives who were much pleased with the attention, one which no European of high station in Calcutta had previously paid to any of them. The thoughtfulness of this hospitality was further expressed in the adoption of a native custom, described in this passage:

I introduced these Baboos to the Chief-justice, which pleased them much, though perhaps they were still better pleased with my wife herself presenting them with pawn, rose-water, and attar of roses before they went, after the native custom.¹

This occasion brought public criticism to the Bishop from Mr. Wilson, one of the missionary clergy, who saw fit to make a pulpit attack on the Bishop "for having a Dinner and an evening party on the day on which his little girl had been christened"(!) This was not a question of Sunday observance, but of the combination of these two events on the same day. Reginald did not mention this until a year later in a confidential letter to John Thornton. Commenting that he had always held, on Biblical grounds, that an entertainment of that nature,

when conducted with sobriety and modesty was no improper testimony of joy even for spiritual blessings.....I believe he was afterwards sorry, - and, I thank God, - I was not very angry.²

1 Ibid. p.80.

2 Thornton Collection - MS. Letter, 12th May 1825. (unnumbered).

Quite in contrast with such narrowness and lack of judgment, on the part of one of his own clergy, was the cordial relation evident between the Bishop and the various Dissenter missionaries in Calcutta. In this sphere of relationship, it would be easier to understand if conflicting doctrines and techniques should have served to keep the episcopal head of the Church of England in India far removed from common contact with missionaries not of his own Church. But, even this greater gulf was easily bridged by Bishop Heber in the outreach of his spirit of co-operation, before the all but overwhelming task which faced the Christian missionaries. On 15th January, 1824, he had as his dinner guest, Dr. Joshua Marshman, fellow-worker with Dr. William Carey at the Baptist mission at Serampore. In his "Journal" for that day, the Bishop wrote,

The talents and learning of these good men are so well known in Europe, that I need hardly say that, important as are the points on which we differ, I sincerely admire and respect, and desire their acquaintance.¹

A letter, written by Heber to Marshman, several months later, just before he left on his first visitation, reveals the depth of Christian spirit which motivated him in all his relations with Christian workers of other churches in India.

I have seldom felt more painfully than while reading your appeal on the subject of Serampore College, the unhappy divisions of those who are

1 Heber, Reginald - Indian Journal, Vol.I. p.57.

servants of the same Great Master. Would to God my honoured brethren, the time were arrived when, not only in heart and hope, but visibly, we shall be one fold, as well as under one Shepherd! In the meantime, I have arrived, after some serious considerations, at the conclusion, that I shall serve our great cause most effectually by doing all which I can for the rising institutions of those with whom my sentiments agree in all things, rather than by forwarding the labours of those from whom in some important points, I am conscientiously constrained to differ.

Then Heber expressed his faith that, as sincere Christians, a basis of resolving or softening their differences might be found, and continued,

.....it is my desire, if you permit, to discuss with both of you, in the spirit of meekness and conciliation, the points which now divide us, convinced that if a reunion of our churches could be effected, the harvest of the heathen would ere long be reaped, and the work of the Lord would advance among them with a celerity of which we have now no experience.¹

Unfortunately, the opportunity never developed, during the remainder of the Bishop's short life. William Carey's commentary on this letter was, "Bishop Heber is a man of liberal principles and catholic spirit."

In view of Heber's excellent relations with all groups in the Church, with other Christian societies and mission groups, with the Company and Government officials, and with the leading natives of Calcutta, it may seem strange to find the

1 Marshman, John C. - Story of Carey, Marshman, and Ward. p. 276.

biographer of a later successor, Bishop Daniel Wilson, who came to that See in 1832, commenting that, "Bishop Heber had been blamed for neglecting etiquette".¹ There is no elaboration of this statement and one, not knowing the life of Reginald Heber, could very easily be misled. His devotion to duty in the Church, and his thoughtfulness, as a host and as a friend, for all classes and groups of people in the community, afford no opportunity for criticism. A careful study of his life in India offers only one point of variation from the norm of a Bishop, and this may have been the unknown basis for the charge of his having been guilty of "neglecting etiquette". Bishop Heber was ahead of his age in the matter of clerical costume! He, seemingly, refused to dress as other people thought Bishops should be attired. He dressed for comfort. It had taken the early Company traders several generations to learn the wisdom of a simple costume for India. Heber adjusted immediately. Lord Combermere, writing, shortly after his capture of Bhurtpore, to his sister in England, commented in an affectionate manner on his friendship with Reginald and concluded with, "He looks very unlike a bishop, generally wearing a black jacket."² The Archdeacon Barnes, drawing near the end of his ten year period of service in Bombay, felt

1 Bateman, Josiah - Life of Rgt.Rev.Daniel Wilson, D.D.
p.325.

2 Mary, Viscountess of Combermere - Memoirs and Correspondence of Viscount Combermere,
p.140.

distressed by his Bishop's appearance upon his first visitation to that presidency, and he noted in his "Journal",

The Bishop's manner everywhere is exceedingly popular; and though there are some points, such as his wearing white trousers and a white hat, which I could wish were altered with more regard to his station, and which, perhaps strike me the more after being accustomed to the particular attention of Bishop Middleton in such points, yet really I feel compelled to forgive him, when I observe his unreserved frankness, his anxious and serious wish to do all the good in his power, his truly amiable and kindly feelings, his talents and piety, and his extraordinary powers of conversation, accompanied with so much cheerfulness and vivacity. I see the advantage which Christianity and our Church must possess in such a character, to win their way and keep all together in India.¹

Apparently the Bishop had charmed the Archdeacon with his personality, if not with his costume. He preferred his pith helmet, which was light and cool, to his episcopal hat when travelling. The white trousers he adopted soon after his arrival in India; and recommended them to his clergy on all ordinary occasions. He considered himself justified in dispensing with a form of dress which, though very commendable in England, was of little importance and, indeed, harmful in a climate where health and comfort depend so much on avoiding everything that can increase its pernicious effects. His influence on society was to be made by his simplicity of character and not by ecclesiastical prerogative.

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II. p.299.

The Bishop, during his months of incessant toil, had been looking forward eagerly to his first official visitation which was to take him through the northern part of the Empire, the Upper Provinces,¹ and down to Bombay on the opposite coast, before sailing to the island of Ceylon off the southern tip of India and thence back to Calcutta. Nearly four thousand miles of hard travel, by every available means of transportation, and under primitive living and travel conditions at many stages, faced the nineteenth century apostle. He had originally planned that his wife and children were to accompany him on the first easy stage of the journey to the highlands, where they could escape the summer heat of the city. His domestic chaplain, the Rev. Martin Stow, who had reached India late in March with his sister, was to make the entire journey with him as his companion. The first Burma war had begun in February and Heber hesitated to request the Company for an assistant-surgeon to travel with him, as it was within his position to do. Accordingly, he changed the plan concerning his family so that they should join him when he reached Bombay for the sea voyage.

As the month of May advanced, the heat became so

1 In the eight years of the first episcopate, Bishop Middleton had found ample occupation at Calcutta and in Southern India. No visitation had been made in the northern portion which Heber, therefore, selected as his first visitation.

unbearable that Heber described it in this way to his friend, Wynn.

Some days, indeed, during this month have been almost deserving the name of 'terrible'. By shutting all the windows close, by darkening the room to the lowest ebb of visibility, and sitting as lightly dressed as possible under the constant ventilation of a punkah, one got through the morning pretty well, and I found no want of disposition or ability either to write or study. But if a window or a door was opened, the stream of hot air came in, without the least exaggeration, like what you may have felt at the mouth of a blast furnace.¹

The Hebers and all others, recently arrived from England, were to feel the heat greatly until they had become acclimated to the higher temperatures of India. An excellent friend of Reginald's, Sir Christopher Puller, newly come to assume the post of Chief-justice at Calcutta, succumbed to fever within six weeks, leaving a wife and child to return to England on the same ship which had brought the family to Calcutta. The service was read by the Bishop just before he left Calcutta, his wife and two small children, for his extensive journey into the interior of India. It was with a heavy heart that he began his visitation on 15th June, 1824, accompanied only by Chaplain Stow and his native servants. The monsoon rains came that night.

1 Heber, Reginald - Indian Journal, Vol.I. p.335.

Chapter Ten

THE VISITATIONS OF THE LORD PADRE SAHIB

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THE VISITATIONS OF THE LORD PADRE SAHIB.

The record of Bishop Heber's journey through the Upper Provinces of India, from Calcutta to Bombay, 1824-1825, was kept in a daily journal form which he dispatched back to his wife in Calcutta. The half formed plan of future publication of these notes led him to write a detailed, copious account of everything that he found of interest in his travels. His early experience in touring Northern Europe as a student provided a valuable basis of experience for his record. His habits and accomplishments as a writer bequeathed to the English libraries of the nineteenth century an important insight into Indian life and customs, as viewed by a talented traveller under advantageous circumstances. A contemporary reviewer, speaking of his talent for that task, noted,

He possessed the eye of a painter and the pen of a poet; a mind richly stored with the literature of Europe, both ancient and modern; great natural shrewdness and sagacity; and a temper as amiable and candid as ever accompanied and adorned the energies of a fine genius.....
His views were, on all important subjects, those of one who had seen and read much, and thought more - liberal, expansive, worthy of a philosopher and a statesman.¹

Many articles on India had appeared in the magazines of England, and a number of historical studies were then beginning

1 Quarterly Review. Vol.XXXVII. 1828. p.102.

to make their appearance, but nothing of the breadth of scope and interest of his records had been written to enrich the minds of Englishmen with the contemporary Indian scene. It was noted, in 1828, that only three English gentlemen had as yet travelled in India completely as volunteers - Lord Valentia, a young man of fortune; a Mr. Hyde, and Bishop Heber. It was impossible that a person of so active and cultivated a mind as Reginald's should survey the Indian world without instituting inquiries and forming opinions respecting the history, the government, the manners, the arts, and the antiquities of the people among whom he lived. He was too devoted a lover of nature to travel far in the unknown land without contemplating and admiring the wonders which he viewed. How well he succeeded in portraying the India he saw, is realised when one reads P.R. Krishnaswami's introduction to the edition of selections from Heber's "Indian Journal", which was published on its one hundredth anniversary in 1923.¹ In it, the Indian editor stated that the Bishop's "Journal" ranks as one of the numerous travel-books on India that have become source-books for Indian history.

The writing of his Indian Journal, monumental as it has proved to be, was only an indirect result of his trip, the purpose of which was, as he himself described it simply, "to

1 Krishnaswami, P.R. ed. - Heber's Indian Journal.

inspect the conduct of the Company's Chaplains". His eager interest led him into a thorough investigation of every aspect of the religious activity of the Chaplains and the missionaries in every station along his far-flung route. At the same time, he evidenced the outlook of a far-seeing statesman.

Everywhere he was anxious to test the meaning and stability of British administration in India. He criticised British Officials and British Policy with friendly frankness, and was untiring in offering constructive suggestions for reform and progress. He was anxious to establish a cordial social understanding between Englishmen and Indians, and he himself led the way by his example.¹

During his travels, he "kept up a pretty constant interchange of letters"² with Lord Amherst, and a study of these letters of Heber show his concern that the British Government govern wisely for the welfare of all native inhabitants of India. Other letters were directed to the members of the Board of Control of Indian Affairs to supplement their other sources of information. He reported that his servants had told him, that,

even so trifling a circumstance as his going through the country, with a numerous escort and a certain degree of official rank, in an opposite course from the supposed tide of European migration, produced a good deal of surprise among the people of the villages, and led them to think more favourably of the continuance of English rule than they had previously done,³

1 Ibid. p.xiv.

2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II. p.311.

3 Ibid. p.277.

After two weeks of slow river travel the Bishop's party reached Dacca, their first station stop. Stow, suffering a recurrence of an attack of dysentery, was very ill. His condition failed to improve, and, fourteen days later, the Chaplain died. This tragic loss bore heavily on the Bishop. He was the second valued friend taken from him within a few months. Reginald's sensitive spiritual nature had been deeply impressed with the experience of death as he had witnessed its coming to his aged father, to his brother, and his first-born; the passing of Stow, whom he regarded as a younger brother, became another unforgettable scene in his memory of loved ones.

During the time at Dacca, the Bishop stayed with Mr. Masters, the principal judge. He consecrated the Church and cemetery, and held a Confirmation service before leaving. One of the men confirmed was R. Mitford, the junior judge, who, in a letter to his brother, John, in England, made a pertinent observation on the Bishop's personality.

I knew Bishop Middleton whose pomposity was his failing but Bishop Heber is so unassuming, so mild so (simple), so (gentlemanly) that he cannot but be beloved and respected by everyone. We were all delighted with him.¹

Shortly after leaving Dacca he wrote a lengthy letter, describing to Augustus Hare his friend Stow's last days. A

1 Mitford, R. - Letter to John Mitford 28 July, 1824.
British Museum MS. 28,322.

self-revealing passage from this letter, omitted by Mrs. Heber in editing, helps us to understand his feelings as he looked back on the intensive eight months of work he had devoted to the See of Calcutta since his arrival.

Meantime, I am far from repenting my coming out to India, where I am sure I am not idle, and hope I am not useless - though I have alas! fallen far short of my own good intentions, and have failed, to a greater extent than I expected, in conciliating the respective bigots of the High and Low Church parties.¹

His aims were high, but he had accomplished more than he realised in healing the splits among the sincere-minded members of the Calcutta Churches.

A physical sign of his toil was to be noted in the Bishop's changed appearance. Abdullah, one evening when he had been walking up and down, besought him not to take so much exercise, saying that "it was that which had turned his hair so grey since his arrival in India." The servant's observation is one of several indications we have in this journal that the Bishop felt the strain of his work and showed signs of age, within the first year in his new position. In the previous February, he had made reference to his health,

I have not begun very well with my experiments on an Indian climate, my eyes being still very painful; and a fall from

1 Hare, Augustus W. - Memorials of a Quiet Life, p.61.

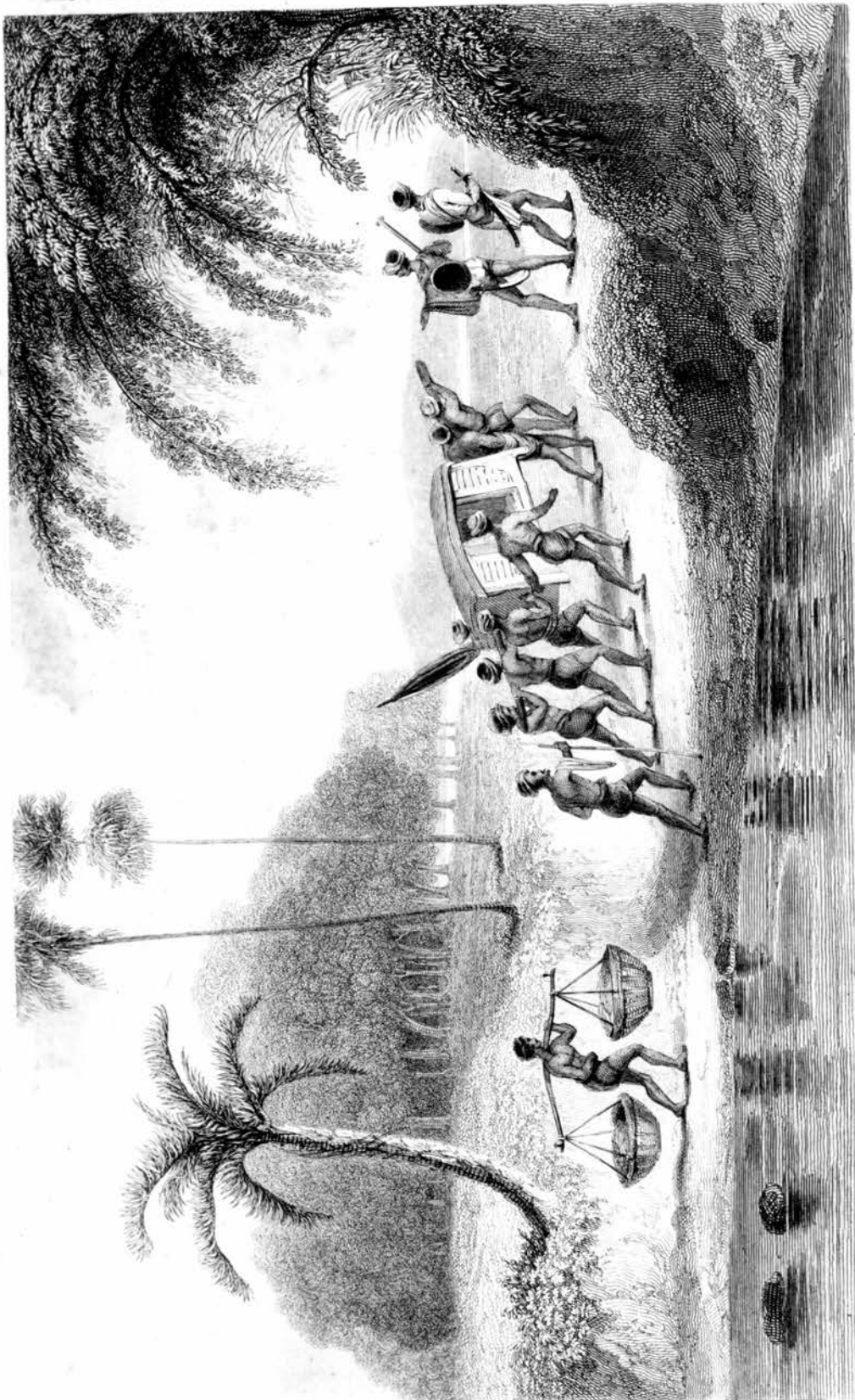
my horse.....having produced effects on my
general health, which in Europe I should never
have anticipated.¹

En route, his health was fairly good, except for some boils and an attack of fever, which, coupled with the effects of his long, fatiguing visitation, left him, as he wrote in warning to his wife, "a good deal aged, looking harassed, worn and grown much thinner." When he finally reached Bombay, Lady West, commenting on his appearance, wrote in her "Journal", "He is thin, and looks ten years older than Edward, though exactly the same age."² The Bishop himself, however, felt that his health, with few exceptions, had been as good as it ever was in England.

As one reads of the types of primitive transportation which were of necessity used - river boats, horses, mule, pony, elephants, carriage, palanquin, dak and by foot - in all kinds of weather, from the heat of the sun burning like a furnace, to the drenching downpour of a monsoon; it is not surprising to learn that the visitation shortened his life expectancy. Even physical discomfort had its humorous aspect, as illustrated by a description furnished by a traveller who accompanied him between some of the stations; after a two hour ride straight into a pelting rain storm, which caught

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II.
p.190.

2 Drewitt, F.D. - Bombay in the Days of George IV. p.175.



Engraved by J. Taylor from a Drawing by Bishop H. G. G.

THE BISHOP'S BARGE

them by surprise, they finally reached a roadside travel shelter, where, after getting a fire started,

There was the Lord Bishop of all the Indies sitting cowering over a wretched fire of wet wood, the smoke of which produced a bleary redness about the eyes, surrounded by a group of shivering blacks, some squatting, some half afraid to come further than the door-way of the hut; and in the back ground, close to his head, my horse's tail, with a boy attempting to scrape off some of the mud, with which the poor beast was covered all over.¹

James Lushington wryly expressed the thought, "Perhaps the smoke and stink etc., kept out the cold", but, in a short time after they had laughed at the ludicrous figures they made, the roof began to leak like a sieve. The beds having been thoroughly soaked, they crawled into the palanquins to sleep.

Young Lushington and the Bishop were accompanied in part of the journey through the Upper Provinces by Archdeacon Corrie and his wife, who were visiting some of the centers of the earlier years of their missionary activity. Heber's sense of humour caused him to describe his caravan in this manner,

Our motley train, consisting of twenty-four camels, eight carts drawn by bullocks, twenty-four horse-servants, including those of the Archdeacon and Mr. Lushington, ten ponies, forty bearers and coolies of different descriptions, twelve tent-pitchers, and a guard of twenty Sepoys under a native officer. The whimsical caravan filed off in state before me; my servants, all armed with spears, to which many of them had added at their own cost, sabres of the longest growth, looked, on their little

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II.
p.251.

poneys, like something between cossacks and sheriff's javelin-men; my new Turkman horse, still in the costume of his country, with his long, squirrel-like tail painted red, and his mane plaited in love-knots, looked as if he were going to eat fire, or perform some other part in a melodrama; while Mr. Lushington's horses, two very pretty Arabs, with their tails docked, and their saddles English fashion, might have attracted notice in Hyde-Park, the Archdeacon's buggy and horse had every appearance of issuing from the back gate of a college in Cambridge on a Sunday morning; and lastly came some mounted gens d'armes, and a sword and buckler-man on foot, looking exactly like the advanced guard of a Tartar army.¹

A man of simple tastes, Reginald found no great enjoyment in the entourage which he found it necessary to support, in view of his exalted position as head of the British Church in India. On one occasion when the local ruler insisted on sending an additional guard of over fifty horsemen with him on the next stage of his journey - "he could not help thinking that since the days of Thomas a Becket or Cardinal Wolsey, an English Bishop had seldom been so formidably attended". However, he appreciated the importance of the impression to be made upon the local dignitaries and native rulers.

When his servants were asked en route concerning the identity of the great Englishman, their employer, their answer was, "He is the Lord Padre Sahib". Thus was introduced a new title into the lexicon of the Church.

1 Heber, Reginald - Indian Journal, Vol.I. p.339.

Even though Heber's chief purpose was the visitation and inspection of the churches and evidences of their work in this part of his diocese, he was very much aware of the good-will which would be created by his visiting the rajahs and princes of the country through which he passed. His visits with the Raja Omichund and his two young sons, living within the ruins of past splendour; with the Nawab of Dacca; at the Courts of Baroda and Jyepoor; with the King of Oude; and with the Emperor of Delhi, provide some of the most interesting views of regal splendour and customs in Heber's "Journal". On some of the occasions when gifts were exchanged, the Bishop presented attractively bound copies of the Arabic Bible and the Hindustanee Common Prayer Book. In the exchange of courtesies and gifts, which form a common feature of these royal visits, one is specially impressed by Heber's never failing consideration and courtesy, which was always equal to the traditional graciousness of the Eastern hosts. In his visit to Oude, he sensed that the king felt slighted because he had not been notified by a letter from the Governor-General in the usual manner, instead of having received his notification through the resident Company agent. The Bishop explained, satisfactorily, that he was not on government business; but he immediately sent a letter to Lord Amherst suggesting the expedience of sending an official message to the king, along with an acknowledgment of the attentions shown to the episcopal ruler of the Church in India. One other incident, out of many that

might be mentioned, provides a good illustration of the Bishop's consideration of etiquette during these royal visits:

The Raja offered to return my visit next day; but, knowing that Tuesday is, in the estimation of all Hindoos, unlucky, I named Wednesday in preference, telling him my reason. He answered very politely that he should account every day lucky in which he had the opportunity of cultivating my acquaintance, but was evidently well pleased. He had already, out of civility, and in consequence of being informed that I received no visits on Sunday, waved one prejudice in my favour; since the day on which I arrived, being the last day of their month, was one on which he usually never stirred from home.¹

The king, impressed with the natural charm and culture of his ecclesiastical visitor, invited him to sit for his portrait during his stay. It was painted by Mr. Home, the court artist. The same esteem in which he was held by the ruler was shared by his military guard, furnished by the Company. When one of the Sepoy groups was relieved from duty to return to its station, the greater number of them, in saying farewell, expressed their regret that they were not going with him "to the world's end". The Bishop, moved by their demonstration, humbly meditated that,

It had not been excited, so far as I know, by any particular desert on my part; but I had always spoken to them civilly, had paid some attention to their comforts in securing them tents, firewood, and camels for their knapsacks, and had ordered them a dinner, after their own

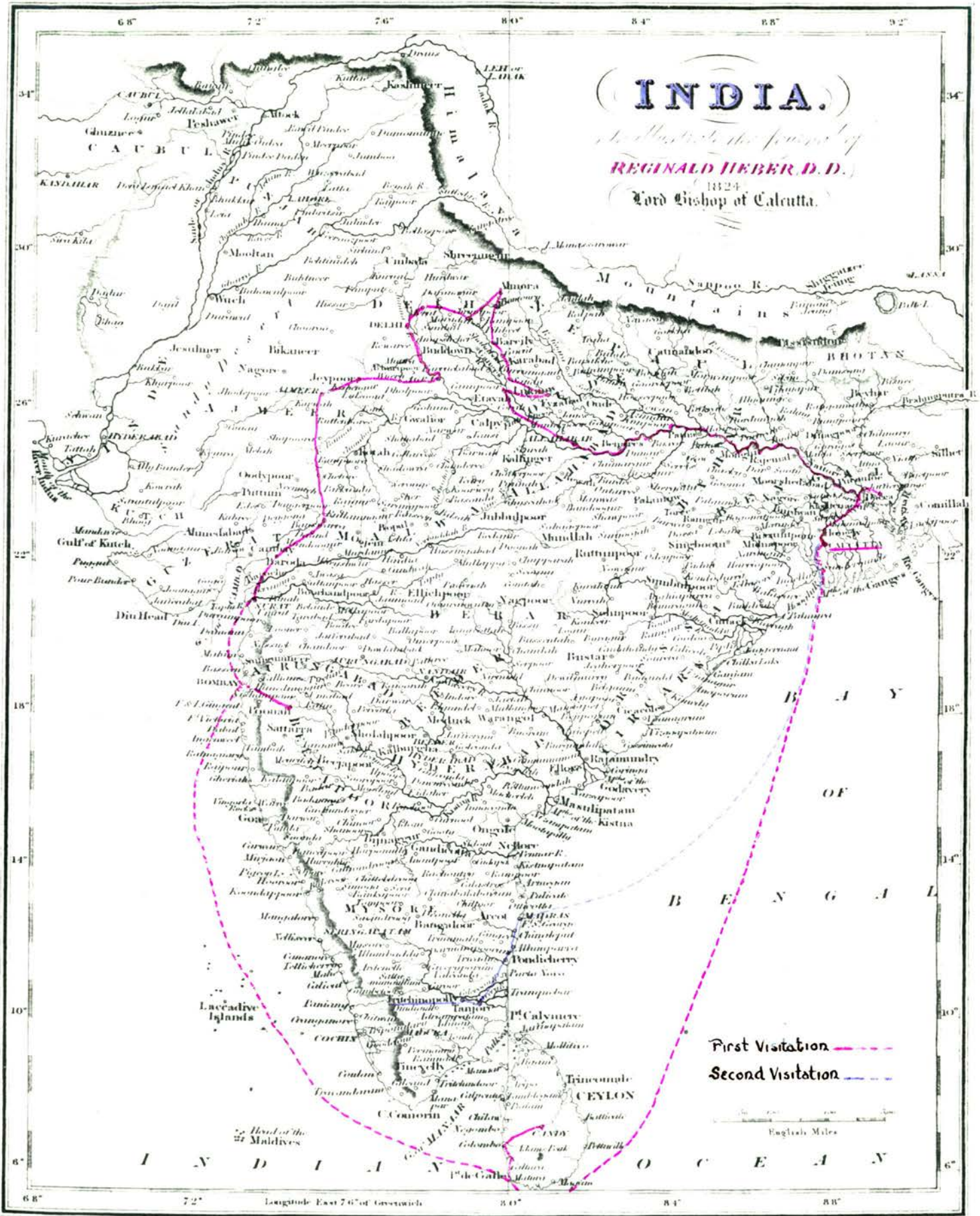
1 Ibid. Vol.II. p.131.

fashion, on their arrival at Lucknow, at the expense of, I believe, not more than four rupees! Surely if goodwill is to be bought by these sort of attentions, it is a pity that any body should neglect them.¹

Reginald Heber, as a young man, travelling in several European countries, had shown himself to be a worthy representative of his native land in all his social contacts; in his prime, in a place of great responsibility, he continued to reveal all the qualities of an ambassador of good will toward the princes and the conquered people of India.

Beginning with Dacca and continuing through the Central Provinces, as far north as Almorah on the edge of the Himalayas, south to Agra, Bishop Heber and his escort continued to the western coast, where the English had established a trading port at Surat, two hundred years previously. On this first visitation of the episcopal head of the Church to the Company stations and posts on the northern and western borders of British India, from Calcutta to Surat, the Bishop had travelled two thousand slow torturous miles, making the supervision and ministry of the Church real, to several hundred British soldiers, and Government and Company officials, serving along the far-flung border. Like the ancient apostolic bishops, Heber visited the churches and groups of Christians who met for services along his route. He preached and held prayers

1 Ibid. Vol.I. p.411.



INDIA.

Illustrated for the purpose of
REGINALD HEBER, D.D.
1824

Lord Bishop of Calcutta.

First Visitation ————
Second Visitation ————

English Miles

followed by the sacrament of communion for groups, from as small as twenty people to as large as three hundred. In the twenty-seven posts visited, he preached over fifty times to congregations totalling over two thousand people, with one third of that number remaining for the sacrament to be administered to them. Approximately eight hundred and fifty individuals were confirmed by the Bishop. He also consecrated churches at Dacca, Meerut, Baroda, Kairah and Surat. For one of the churches, which desired a bell to summon its members, Reginald sketched plans for its belfry, which was later constructed. At several places, he held christenings and baptisms. At Lucknow and Bareilly, couples to be married awaited his arrival. He established a mission among the Puharees, with the Rev. Thomas Christian as their missionary. This brief statistical glimpse of the totality of his ecclesiastical efforts on his primary visitation, where no bishop of the Church had penetrated, gives life to the Bishop's phrase that he often served as "bishop, chaplain, and curate all in one".

Everywhere he travelled he was met with an enthusiastic welcome from the British military men and Company officials, who joined with the Chaplains and Missionaries in expressing their pleasure at his visit to their stations. An army officer, stationed at Neemuch, wrote in his letter back to England,

The arrival of Bishop Heber has excited general expectations, from the learning of so celebrated a scholar and divine; though

from the immense extent of his charge, he can scarcely ever visit the greater half of these dominions, so as to effect any more than progressive benefits in his episcopal exertions.¹

In a similar expression, of the emotion stirred, and the good-will created, a letter from Norman Macleod, Magistrate at Benares, an echo of far off Oxford and the delivery of the prize poem, "Palestine", is heard.

Your visit has been productive of much good in this community.....
.....
And thus it will hardly seem strange to you that the strains of pious and holy instruction, which fixed so impressive a record of our first visitation by a Protestant prelate on the minds of us all, should have spoken with peculiar emphasis to the feelings of one who, after many a year of toil and exile in a foreign clime, recognized in the accents which now preached the Word of the Living God, amid the favourite abodes of heathen idolatry, that self-same voice which, in his days of youthful enthusiasm and ardent undamped fancy, had poured on his delighted ear the lay that sung the sacred theme of the Redeemer's land, amid the long-loved haunts of his alma mater.²

The Rev.Mr.Fisher, of the Meerut station, summed up the benefit of his visitation for all the posts, when he wrote, "Our dear and respected bishop has left an impression behind him which, I think, will not soon or easily pass away." In all these efforts there was a deep joy and satisfaction, which more than balanced the personal physical expenditure which the Bishop had been called on to make. Each service he held constituted a rich memory.

1 Bonner, George - Memoir of the Life of Rgt.Rev. Reginald Heber, D.D. p.52.

2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II. p.243.

There were other memorable experiences which had come to him in the ten months since he had left Calcutta. At Secrole, he, for the first time, pronounced the benediction in Hindu-stanee at a native service. The native Christians were thus brought into a close and understood relationship with the Bishop of the Church. At Almorah, he,

enjoyed the gratification of being the first Protestant Minister who had preached and administered the sacraments in so remote, yet so celebrated a region.¹

There, in that northern city, close to the Chinese border, he viewed the "glorious icy mountains" of the Himalayas, "towering in a clear blue sky". It was one of the many experiences which he wished to share with his wife. At the end of each day, he recounted in his "Journal" the sights and people that he had encountered that day; and, on occasion, he was moved to express his mood of loneliness in verse. These emotions were expressed in two poems, "An Evening Walk in Bengal", and "If thou wert by my side, my love!", which have been listed among his finest poetic efforts. At Meerut, he had been surprised to hear two of his Hodnet hymns sung better than he had ever heard them sung before.

The antiquity of the ruins attracted his attention along the journey, and the history of the various Indian peoples

¹ Heber, Reginald - Indian Journal, Vol.I. p.495.

challenged his avid scholarly interest at all times. The beauty of the celebrated Taj Mahal exceeded, rather than fell short of his expectations, in spite of the praises which had been lavished on it. But the primary interest of the Bishop was, as it always had been, in the people he met, from the lowest beggar on the road side to the wealthiest potentate in the luxurious splendour of his Eastern court. The vast storehouse of his mind was being filled with his observations. Out of these experiences, he wrote in this vein to C.W.W.Wynn:

Large sums have also been laid out in repairing and beautifying the different temples and tombs of the Hindoos and Mussalmans. Now I have ascertained from various quarters that for this expence nobody thanks us; and though I admire the works of ancient art as much as anybody, and though there are, undoubtedly, some few buildings, such as the Jumna Murjeed at Delhi and the Taj-Mahal at Agra, which it would be a national disgrace to allow to fall, yet I confess I am more anxious for the general repair of roads, the opening and restoration of canals, and, above all, for the repair of the magnificent caravanseries, which are every where falling into ruin, and the preservation of which is among the greatest boons which can be conferred on the nations of Upper India;

In the same letter to the President of the Board of Control for Indian Affairs, he stated, as a result of his observations, that there were no great nor crying abuses, except those connected with the Adawlut; and, where abuses did exist, he had not found them favoured or a source of profit to any servants of government. But, he called the system of government, one of "delay, of weakness, of niggardliness, and of insulation".

On the whole, a want of magistrates, a want of troops, a want of public expenditure, and a desire to augment the revenue, arising from the necessity imposed on the supreme government of sending all the treasure they can scrape together to England, seem to be, at present, the chief dangers of our eastern dominions.¹

The natives were less and less consulted or conciliated, and, though the absence of actual oppression was a blessing, Heber felt that the Company was not doing all they ought to do nor all which was necessary for them to do to preserve their Indian empire. He was also sensitive to the tendency of the English officials to be clannish and to isolate themselves from native society,

which makes the English, wherever they go, a caste by themselves, disliking and disliked by all their neighbours. Of this foolish, surly, national pride I see but too many instances daily, and I am convinced it does us much harm in this country. We are not guilty of injustice, or wilful oppression, but we shut out the natives from our society, and a bullying, insolent manner is continually assumed in speaking to them.²

Heber had been in India only fifteen months when he made this pertinent observation on a weakness in the colonial administration of his countrymen. His own kindness and friendliness rebelled at such an attitude as he found being so thoughtlessly expressed by English officials.

1 Heber, Amerlia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II. p.292.

2 Heber, Reginald - Indian Journal, Vol.I. p.591.

Bishop Heber was met at Jeroda by Archdeacon Barnes who had come from Bombay to join him in the Holy Week Services, and to accompany him into the presidency. The two men had not seen each other for seventeen years, since Oxford days; each found the other much as he remembered him, but naturally older. Dr. Barnes had come out to India, as Archdeacon of Bombay, with Bishop Middleton in 1814, and was the only one of the three original Archdeacons, and Bishop, who had reached the prescribed term of residence in India. He had prolonged his stay in order to greet Bishop Heber. Following a morning spent in discussion of the ecclesiastical affairs of the Bombay diocese, the Archdeacon recorded in his "Journal" these observations:

It was really a most interesting event to receive here on the plains of Guzerat, the second Bishop of the English Church, and to be planning schemes for the eternal interests of the ignorant and idolatrous people by whom we were surrounded.¹

It was then above ten months since he had left Calcutta, and during that time he had visited nearly every station of importance in the upper provinces of Bengal and north of Bombay.

He has made a more laborious, harassing, and fatiguing journey than is often done by any civil or military person, certainly than has fallen to the usual lot of a Christian bishop.²

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II. p.298.

2 Ibid. p.301.

The Bishop's arrival in Bombay in mid-April was made joyous by reunion with his wife and elder daughter who, coming by sea from Calcutta, reached there a few days after he did. All three members of his family had been victims of an epidemic fever which raged in India during the summer of 1824 and his deep concern over their welfare had been an added strain during the months of separation. The visit to Bombay had been looked forward to by Reginald Heber, for the opportunity it offered of reunion with former acquaintances. In addition to that of Dr. Barnes, he had received invitations to stay with Sir Edward West and Sir Charles Chambers, Judges of the King's Court. The sojourn in Bombay lasted longer than the Bishop had planned and during the four months there, they were the guests of the Governor, Mountstuart Elphinstone. Affairs of the Church and the Clergy necessitated the extent of the stay, but it also proved a very congenial interlude for the Hebers in the English society of the city, and "a fresh moral atmosphere was created by his visit."

He was much impressed with the promising state of the Church as it had developed in the archdeaconry under the supervision of Dr. Barnes. To the three churches of the diocese, which he had consecrated en route to the capitol of the presidency, he was to add those of St. James, Thana; and St. Mary's, Poona.¹ The faithful minister of the latter church

1 Ashley-Brown, W. - On the Bombay Coast and Deccan.
p.125.

Chaplain Thomas Robinson, was invited to serve as domestic Chaplain to the Bishop.

One of Bishop Heber's first duties was to preach and hold a confirmation for one hundred and twenty children at St. Thomas Church. Dr. Barnes' MS. Journal, quoted by Mrs. Heber in the "Life" dated this service as April 25th. Part of it reads,

After the confirmation, the Bishop, as was his usual custom, addressed the candidates from the rails of the Communion-table. His charge was well adapted for the occasion; was impressively delivered; and appeared to have its due effect on all.¹

Another "Journal" notation for what was, presumably, the same service is found in that of Lady West, but her date for Sunday is the 24th. The Judge's wife, whom we have previously called for testimony, on this occasion and others, concerning Reginald Heber's preaching ability, wrote her diary with disarming frankness. She gave her reactions each time she heard him preach, and the Heber name also appears frequently in view of the increased social activities in his honour, given by the local society. The first Sunday that he preached, Lady West commenting on the community interest, wrote,

The Bishop preached this morning to an overflowing Congregation whose curiosity took them there. Usually the Church is quite deserted.

This lack of a congregation she had observed nearly three months earlier. The next Sunday the Bishop again preached,

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II.
p.303.

but she did not find it as interesting as the first time. Two weeks later, she acknowledged that he gave an excellent sermon, but, on the fourth occasion, we find that she observed,

July 31 - Went to Church, the Bishop preached a Sermon about the Unjust Steward; it is always an obscure and difficult subject to understand, and he in my opinion did not enlighten it at all.¹

On 23rd May, 1825, under the leadership of Bishop Heber and Archdeacon Barnes, a meeting of all the prominent men of the presidency resulted in the formation of the first District Committee of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, in India. Through the influence of the office of the Bishop, and, more particularly, of his winning personality and reputation, the notable gathering included:

the governor, the Honourable Mr. Elphinstone; the chief, and the two puisne justices; the commander-in-chief; and almost all the members of government, together with all the clergy of the island, and a majority of the principal civil, naval, and military officers now within the limits of the presidency.²

Much of the credit for the advance preparation for the meeting was acknowledged by the Bishop as due to the efforts of Dr. Barnes. The formation of this District Committee had, as its general object, the furtherance of the Society designs in India; and, in particular, the promotion of the establishment and support of Missions and schools within the limits of the

1 Drewitt, F.D. - Bombay in the Days of George IV. p.184.

2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II. p.317.

Archdeaconry of Bombay; the maintenance and education in Bishop's College, Calcutta, of proper persons to conduct the same; also, the provision to the College and to the Society information as to the means and opportunities for Missionary exertions in the Presidency of Bombay.¹ A notable sum of money was donated by this distinguished group of officials. Sir Edward West, according to his wife's "Journal", gave a donation of 3000 rupees and an annual subscription of 100 rupees. Others were equally generous in their support. The Bishop saw in the success of this undertaking a worthwhile example set for Ceylon, Madras, and Calcutta, which was of great value because of Mr. Elphinstone's patronage. Through this approach, Bishop's College was to gain valuable support as a project of the whole Church in India.

The Honourable Mountstuart Elphinstone, Governor of the Bombay Presidency, was one of the leading administrators in the East India Company's service and enjoyed a high reputation for his pre-eminent knowledge of the natives of India and their feelings and interest. The two men, the Governor and the Bishop, found they shared much in common and became very good friends during the four months. Both had travelled extensively and read widely, and the only impediment to their friendship was the shyness of Elphinstone, which was soon

1 Digest of S.P.G. Records, p.569.

overcome. The Governor's estimation of Heber is reflected in this excerpt from his diary:

May 3 - The Bishop is here, in very general admiration simple, kind, lively, liberal, learned and ingenious. It is seldom one sees a character so perfectly amiable. My shyness and awkwardness prevent my getting so well acquainted with him as I could wish.¹

Reginald Heber was equally as impressed by his host, as the host was by his distinguished guest, for, in a letter to his wife's relatives, he wrote,

The Governor, Mr. Elphinstone, is the cleverest and most agreeable man whom I have yet met with in India, and the public man of all others who seems to have the happiness and improvement of the Indians most closely and continually at heart.²

The laying of the foundation stones of two new Central Schools on 5th May at 7 a.m., was participated in by Lady Chambers and Lady West, for the girls; the Governor and Archdeacon, for the boys. The prayer was offered by the Bishop, and, following the ceremony, at a breakfast given by the Archdeacon, Reginald made a brief speech. In the course of his comments, the Bishop made this forward looking remark,

It must be by this liberal policy, and this intermixture of our own children with those of the natives, that we may hope, by the blessing of Providence, to see the mighty example of England work upon their hearts; we may hope,

1 Colebrook, T.E. - Life of Mountstuart Elphinstone.
Vol.II.p.169.

2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II.
p.311; and
Heber, Reginald - Indian Journal, Vol.II.p.319.

and it is a blessed hope, that when they are educated, and shall see and know the course by which the wisdom of our statesmen, the purity of our judges, the valour of our soldiers have been formed, they will learn to think highly of the source from which effects have followed.¹

Lady West commented,

He made a very appropriate speech, and one knows him so good and so superior a man that every word has, I hope, a good effect. But he cannot be eloquent, having a little hesitation.²

The Governor had arranged for a large group, including the Hebers, the Wests, the Chambers, the Archdeacon and several of the officers with their wives, to make a four day tour through Salsette, which provided a delightful interlude from the pressure of ecclesiastical business for the Bishop. Especially did he enjoy the opportunity it offered to indulge in his old hobby of making sketches of some of the interesting scenes. These and other sketches he had made on his travels were engraved as illustrations for his "Indian Journal".

A three week trip into the Deccan, country but recently conquered from the Maharattas, was made by the Bishop, accompanied by the Archdeacon. Poona, which was to serve as the residence of the chief Commissioner of the newly acquired area, had a small but well-knit Christian nucleus, and its Church, St. Mary's, was consecrated early in July. The

1 Ibid. p.327.

2 Drewitt, F.D. - Bombay in the Days of George IV. p.177.



ST. MARY'S CHURCH, POONA: CONSECRATED 1825 BY BISHOP HEBER.

appearance of the army cantonment and the supervision of the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Charles Colville, and his officers, favourably impressed the Bishop; as did the religious and scholarly ministrations of its Chaplain, Thomas Robinson. An attack of dysentery hampered the Bishop in his round of inspection, but, upon recovery, he proceeded to Tanna where, on July 11th, he consecrated its small Church which he termed "extremely elegant and convenient".¹

While in Bombay, he had preached the first sermon, inaugurating a regular weekly service to be held on one of the large ships in the harbour, to accommodate those officers and men whose duties prevented their attending church in the city.² This plan had been projected some months before by Mr. Davies, the Senior Chaplain.

Everywhere on his long visitation the Bishop had been favourably struck by the character and work of nearly all of his Chaplains and missionaries. But the remainder of his stay in Bombay, according to his "Journal", was,

disagreeably and laboriously occupied in examining into the conduct and character of one of the Chaplains, a man of talent and eloquence, and with high pretensions to austere piety.³

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- 1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II. pp.209 & 215.
 - 2 Missionary Register 1827 p.354. Indicates the Bishop conducted two services on an Indiaman in Bombay Harbour as in response to the Captain's invitation. This seems to be the same incident, with a slightly different emphasis.
 - 3 Heber, Reginald - Indian Journal, Vol.II. p.216.

This case, concerning the Senior Chaplain with whom he had first been in correspondence upon his arrival in India, over that individual's difficulties with the Archdeacon on other matters, was one encumbered with "peculiar difficulties". Some light on this phrase is thrown by Lady West's "Journal", the day the Hebers embarked from Bombay:

Aug.13. Edward went on board to see the Hebers, and heard from the Bishop that nothing could be proved against Mr. - I hope, therefore, that Edward will from authority circulate this, that Party Spirit and ill-will will die away, of which there is always an abundance here, people love gossip and ill-humour.

Seemingly, despite the seriousness of the charges which were advanced in the investigation, the Bishop shared Lady West's sentiments that Party ill-will had coloured the case. Therefore, he followed a policy of conciliation and merely censured the offender. This course of lenient action he later regretted.

The delay of departure from Bombay, occasioned by the Chaplain's case, necessitated a change in the Bishop's original plan to visit the remainder of his diocese before returning to Calcutta. The new plan included a visit to the isle of Ceylon and then the return voyage to the Bengal capital city, to enable him to catch up on all accumulated business before setting off for Madras and the stations which remained. The embarkation from Bombay was made with real regret, for, as Reginald wrote in his "Journal",

We had met with much and marked kindness and hospitality, we had enjoyed the society of several men of distinguished talent, and all my views for the regulation and advantage of the Clergy, and for the gradual advancement of Christianity, had met with a support beyond my hopes, and unequalled in any other part of India.¹

The months spent in Bombay by Reginald Heber were the happiest and most satisfying he had spent in India. He looked forward eagerly to the areas still to be visited.

The arrival in Ceylon on August 25th began another worthwhile visit, despite the inauspicious entry when the ship tossed and rolled in the high sea of the monsoon for a whole morning before it could reach the safety of the harbour, and allow its distinguished guest to disembark. The month which followed was a very interesting one, but never in his life, as he wrote to Archdeacon Barnes, had he ever passed so laborious a one! Over three hundred natives and English were confirmed at the services the Bishop held in Galle, Colombo, Candy and Baddagame. At the latter station, he consecrated the Church that had been built by the two young missionary couples, Mayor and Ward. Both young men were from Shropshire. Mr. Mayor was the son of their neighbouring vicar at Shawbury, when the Hebers had been at Hodnet.

1 Heber, Reginald - Indian Journal, Vol.II. p.218.

In Ceylon, a district committee of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel was established, and a large sum of money was donated for Bishop's College. Bishop Heber was greatly encouraged by the prospects which he saw for Christianity on the island. In conference with the able and active Governor, Sir Edward Barnes, he prepared a plan for restoring the schools, and the system of religious education which had been established by the Dutch, and of uniting it more closely with the Church of England. He was interested in giving the native catechists such facilities for education as would gradually fit them for admittance into holy orders, that they might be used as the basis of a parochial clergy. To these, and other suggestions he made, to both the chaplains and the missionaries, he met the readiest agreement. He commended Mr. Glennie, the new Archdeacon, and declared that the Church missionaries on the island were "really patterns of what missionaries ought to be; zealous, discreet, orderly, and most active." Mr. Lambrick, missionary at Cotta, the principal C.M.S. station on Ceylon, wrote home to England,

To see our excellent bishop, with the most conciliating kindness, interesting himself in all our work, taking part in it as a fellow-labourer, and animating us to proceed with the assured hope of final success; to see him so humble, though so highly gifted - so venerable, though comparatively young - so primitive and apostolic in his manners, though adorned with all the refinements of the most cultivated politeness - this was indeed a most delightful spectacle.¹

1 Bonner, George - Memoir of the Life of Rgt. Rev. Reginald Heber, D.D. p.56.

This missionary's words paint a picture of Bishop Reginald Heber, as he was seen by the congregations of Christians in all the stations he visited, in his first and second visitations in India. The genuine Christian spirit of love which he manifested in all his activities, in the Church, on the Military Post, in the Courts of Native Princes, and in the Residences of the Governors, won the affection of all men, of high and low estate, to the Church and the Heavenly Father whom he represented.

A tedious three week voyage from Pointe de Galle brought the Hebers safely to Calcutta on October 21st, and a joyful reunion with the youngest daughter, restored to good health. The following four months were busy ones filled with the administration of Church affairs, which demanded his special attention. Archdeacon Corrie and Principal Mill had both carried out their work in their respective areas in a way which won the Bishop's sincere approval. On his return, the principal object which first attracted the Bishop's attention, was the superintendence of the new buildings at the College and of the various improvements in the grounds, which were so necessary to the health and comfort of its inhabitants.

Closely connected with the welfare of the Bishop's College project, was his plan to establish a Diocesan Committee of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Calcutta, on the model followed so successfully at Bombay and Ceylon. To this end, he addressed letters to the residents in Calcutta

and to all the influential persons with whom he had become acquainted on his tour through the Upper Provinces; requesting their assistance in forwarding his views. On the 28th November, the day following his sermon on behalf of the S.P.G., the organization meeting was held at the Bishop's residence.

From almost every quarter the Bishop had the gratification of receiving handsome subscriptions, and promises of future assistance. A portion of the money was expressly given for the completion of the college buildings, while the remainder was to be applied to forwarding missionary works in connection with it.¹

His plans met with active and cordial co-operation. Bishop's College, founded by Bishop Middleton, owed its life, after a precarious birth, to his successor, Bishop Heber. It was he who, in its first years, when building costs and operating expenses soared above promised income from England, had the vision of a College supported by the Church in India, and organized support for it in the presidencies of Bombay, and Calcutta, and in the Crown Colony of Ceylon.

During the Bishop's period of residence in Calcutta, and on his formidable tours through the first half of his diocese, he had been studying the problems which were facing the Church in India. The integration of Bishop's College into the life of the Indian Church with the resultant sharing of responsibility for its upkeep and programme, was well on its way to completion

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II.
p.343.

with the organisation of the District Committees of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. To this Society, he intended to transfer, also, the responsibility for the schools being maintained around Calcutta by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, thus freeing this Society for enlarged activity in supplying missionaries and publications for the use of the Chaplains and missionaries, all of which were greatly needed.

A second problem, upon which he had reached a decision of importance for the welfare of the young Church, was that new missionaries being sent out to India henceforth should be "episcopally ordained clergymen", and preferably English. The earliest missionaries in the employ of the Society had been Lutherans, and, prior to the advent of the English Church on the Indian scene, many of them had accomplished fine pieces of work. Of the individual missionaries of the Lutheran Church then in the employ of the Society, he was, on the whole, well pleased, but he recognised,

there is a difference between them and us in matters of discipline and external forms, which often meets the eye of the natives, and produces an unfavourable effect on them. They are preplexed what character to assign to ministers of the Gospel, whom we support and send forth to them, while we do not admit them into our own Churches.¹

1 Ibid. p.348.

The point had not concerned his predecessor whose viewpoint of the role of the Church in India was quite different from that of the missionary-minded Heber. Furthermore, Bishop Middleton's "powers were fettered and curtailed", as he expressed it.¹ Heber had seen to it that the powers to ordain candidates to the Indian ministry were clarified before he left England,² and that, as Bishop, he was free to act in a way in which Middleton had not felt himself empowered. The creation of the native ministry had already been accomplished by Bishop Heber in the ordaining of Christian David.

The second converted native admitted into the ministry of the Church in India, Abdul Messeeh, was ordained on 30th November, 1825, by Bishop Heber in the Calcutta Cathedral.³ Abdul had been led to conversion through the preaching of the Rev. Henry Martyn and had been baptized by Chaplain David Brown on Whitsunday, 1811. In the interval, after further study with Archdeacon Corrie who was then Chaplain at Agra, Abdul had served as a catechist of the Church Missionary Society. When that Society applied to Bishop Middleton to admit him as a Candidate for Orders in the Church over which he presided, the Bishop did not consider himself authorised by his Letters-Patent to ordain Ministers. As a compromise, in line with the

1 Le Bas, Charles W. - Life of Thomas Fanshaw Middleton D.D. Vol.II. p.500.

2 Statutes at Large 4 George IV 1823-24 c.71. p.308.

3 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II. p.363.

practice of the S.P.C.K. in the South of India, Abdul received Lutheran ordination, and this was approved by Bishop Middleton.¹ On his visitation, Bishop Heber, who had been impressed with the zeal and attainments of the convert, was deeply persuaded of the advantages which would accrue from his being connected with the ministry of the English Church; and this led to his ordination, despite the objections of some churchmen to the re-ordination of Lutheran clergymen as being illegal and profane. At the same time, two other missionaries of Lutheran ordination employed in Bengal by the Church Missionary Society, having experienced the inconveniences recognized by Bishop Heber, with the approval of that body, were re-ordained as Priests according to the rites of the Church of England.² These two ministers were the Rev.Theophilus Reichardt, a German graduate of the University and Mission College at Basle, Switzerland, and the Rev.W.Bowley.³ On December 21st, a second ordination was held in the Cathedral and at that time the Rev.John Adlington³ was ordained a Deacon, and the Rev. Fuez Messeeh⁴ was admitted to Deacon's and Priest's Orders. With these accessions to the ministry of the Church, Bishop Heber was starting to solve a most important problem concerning

1 Missionary Register Oct.1827 pp.450-451.

2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II.
p.349.

3 Missionary Register July,1826 p.333.

4 Missionary Register Feb.1827 p.81. No mention of this in Heber's "Life" or "Journal".

the future growth of the Church in India, not merely as it was to concern the English, but, of far greater importance, as it was to become a part of the native Indian life.

Another aspect of Bishop Heber's concern that episcopally ordained clergymen be sent to India is seen in the presence of Father Abraham, the Armenian suffragan from the patriarch of Jerusalem, in the earlier ordination service held at the Cathedral. The Bishop had always encouraged an intimacy with the Armenian clergy, as in every other instance of relationship with the eastern Christians, with the object in view, as he wrote to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel,

to acquire that sort of influence with them which may tend to their good, convincing them, that the Church of England neither claims nor desires any pre-eminence or jurisdiction over them, and that we are only anxious to be the means of reviving learning and scriptural knowledge among their clergy, and increasing in a spirit of brotherly good will, their usefulness and respectability.

Mar Abraham was responsive to the overtures made by Bishop Heber; one of which was to carry a proposal to his patriarch, for printing Armenian ecclesiastical works at Bishop's College instead of at Venice; and another was that arrangements were made for Mesrop David, of that Church, to receive some education at the College in the English language and Western literature. It was Heber's hope that Bishop's College would be enabled to play an important part in the revival of the ancient Asiatic Churches.

Two other problems had engaged the Bishop's mind during

the previous months: the practice of suttee, and the caste system, two customs peculiar to Hindu traditions. Both practices attracted the attention of the missionaries, as they were contrary to Christian teachings. Reginald Heber had come upon one funeral pile where a suttee had just taken place, and his feeling, as noted in his "Journal", shows a Christian reaction but an incomplete understanding of the social custom at that time:

I felt very sick at heart, and regretted I had not been half an hour sooner, though probably my attempts at persuasion would have had no chance of success. I would at least have tried to reconcile her to life.¹

In a subsequent conversation, Mr. Marshman expressed the strong opinion that in Bengal the practice might be forbidden, with little opposition. While this view was supported by some, the members of the Government took a different view of the custom of a widow perishing on the funeral pyre with her husband's body. They argued that to forbid the custom was to enhance it in the eyes of the natives, by making it a point of honour. Other reasons were also advanced, but the one which loomed largest in the mind of Heber had been expressed in this way:

if we desire to convert the Hindoos, we should above all things be careful to keep Government entirely out of sight in all the means which we employ, and to be even, if possible, over scrupulous in not meddling

1 Heber, Reginald - Indian Journal, Vol.I. p.56.

with, or impeding those customs which, however horrid, are become sacred in their estimation, and are only to be destroyed by convincing and changing the popular mind. When Christian Schools have become universal the Suttee will fall of itself.¹

In view of the circumstances surrounding the establishment of the Church in India, it can, at this distant date, be appreciated that Bishop Middleton and Bishop Heber, in his role of conciliator, tended to favour this attitude as the best long-range one which would cause no immediate conflict. Nonetheless, on his journey, as he learned more details concerning this practice, he voiced a determination:

If I live to return to Calcutta, it is possible that by conversation with such of my friends as have influence, and by the help of what additional knowledge I may have acquired during this tour, I may obtain a remedy for some of them. And it is in order that this anxiety may not pass away, but that I may really do some little for the people among whom my lot is thrown, that I have put down more fully the facts which have come to my knowledge.²

His attitude of acquiescence in the status quo had been challenged by his observations. The problem of caste, Heber felt very strongly about, as he expressed in a letter describing the religion of the Hindus to his politically-minded friend, Wilmot-Horton,

1 Ibid. p.58.

2 Ibid. p.269.

in the system of castes, a system which tends more than anything else the Devil has yet invented, to destroy the feelings of general benevolence, and to make nine-tenths of mankind the hopeless slaves of the remainder.¹

He had withheld any official statement concerning this evil until he should have been able to examine, at first hand, conditions in South India where trouble concerning the observance of caste was threatening the harmony of the Church. He made preparations for his trip to Madras and the active Missions of South India, where some of the ablest of the Lutheran missionaries had prepared the way for the establishment of the Church.

In his letter to Richard Heber, M.P., written six weeks prior to sailing for his second visitation, he mentioned the pleasure he and his wife had found in the appointments of Sir Charles Grey² and Lord Combermere,³ both of whom had come to Calcutta in 1825. Grey, an intimate acquaintance of Heber at Oxford, twenty-four years before, had been appointed as Chief Justice to the Court of Bengal, coming to that position from the Court at Madras. In writing of this appointment to Wynn in London, Reginald made an interesting observation,

It happens now, remarkably, that all the three Chief Justices⁴ were my contemporaries

1 Ibid. p.385.

2 Sir Charles Grey (1785-1865) Indian Judge and colonial governor.

3 Lord Combermere (1773-1865) Sir Stapleton Cotton, Commander-in-Chief of Army for India.

4 The other 2 Chief Justices: Sir Edward West, Bombay; and Sir Ralph Palmer, Madras.

at Oxford, and that I have always been on terms of friendly intercourse with all, though Grey was the only one with whom I was intimate.¹

Lord Combermere had come as Commander-in-Chief of India to succeed Sir Edward Paget. He had enjoyed a fine record in the army, and was regarded highly as an officer by Wellington.

Reginald in writing of him to Wynn stated:

I really believe you could have found no person better suited to play the very difficult and important task which was placed in his hands, from his good sense, his readiness in despatch of business, and his accessibility which has gone far to gain him the good-will of the Company's army.²

Lord Combermere, a native of Denbighshire, was also a relative of Emily Shipley Heber. During the short time in the autumn of 1825 before the Commander-in-Chief left to subdue the fortress at Bhurtpore (Bharatpur), Reginald and he enjoyed morning rides together and were with each other frequently.³ The news of the taking of the Jat stronghold at Bhurtpore by Combermere's forces in January did not reach Heber until after he had arrived in Madras. In his letter of congratulations, he offered his services as Chaplain to the Commander, in the event of his deciding to make a northern trip later in the year.⁴ This letter was written on 21st March, 1826, just two

1 Heber, Reginald - Indian Journal Vol.II.p.457.

2 Ibid. p.457.

3 Viscountess of Combermere & Knollys, W.W. - Memoirs and Correspondence of Viscount Combermere, p.140.

4 Ibid. pp.137-139.

weeks prior to his sudden, tragic death.

When Bishop Heber said farewell to his wife and daughters, before embarking on the "Bussorah Merchant" for the slow three week trip down the coast to Madras, he was still recuperating from an attack of fever which he had contracted on a visit to the Chinsurah mission. The parting was a difficult one for both Reginald and Emily, as he expressed it in a note sent back by the river pilot,

I am now quite well. I cannot help thinking that both my illness and yours proceeded, in part, from the agitation of this second sad parting. I should have been unworthy of you could I have left you without a severe pang. We are both of us, however, in God's hands.¹

The Bishop was accompanied on this visitation by his Chaplain, the Rev. Thomas Robinson, of whom Mrs. Heber wrote home to Reginald's mother, "he is an admirable compaignon de voyage, whilst his learning, his good disposition and temper make him the best Chaplain, whether travelling or in repose, I have yet seen here."² The sea air aided the Bishop's recovery, and he continued to maintain a full schedule of activity on board ship. He arranged with Robinson to alternate in visits to the sick officers from the Burma war, who were returning to England. One, who had heard him preach at Meerut the previous

1 Heber, Reginald - Indian Journal, p.429.

2 Cholmondeley, R.H. - The Heber Letters, p.333.

year, requested confirmation, and all were surprised at and appreciative of his interest on their behalf. Daily prayers were conducted for the passengers and crew. The death of a small infant and the efforts of Reginald Heber to comfort the young mother in her loss revealed a side of his ministry which his Chaplain had not appreciated existed.

Upon arriving in Madras on the 25th February, Bishop Heber was met by Colonel Taylor and the Senior Chaplain, Mr. Roy, who escorted him to the residence which had been provided for him. The increasing heat of the season necessitated a shorter stay at the Presidency than he had at first planned. Each day was filled with services and confirmations and visits with the clergy and to the various stations located in and about the city. Large numbers of persons were confirmed; on one occasion nearly five hundred men, women and young people received the sacred rite, a number far greater than any he had previously seen.¹ He preached at St. George's, St. Mary's, and at Black Town, always to large congregations. The male and female orphan schools of the city attracted much of the Bishop's attention. It was in the former that Dr. Bell first had developed the plan for education which, under his name, became so generally adopted in England, as the National System of

1 Robinson, Thomas - The Last Days of Bishop Heber, p.105.

Education. He was pleased with the Chaplains stationed in the vicinity of Madras, and held his visitation at St. George's attended by fourteen of the clergy. The schools and establishment of the S.P.C.K. at Vepery, under the direction of Dr. Rottler and Mr. Haubroe, were visited, and, of them and their work, the Bishop spoke in the highest praise. The work of educating young native girls had developed earlier here than at Calcutta, and the programme surprised the Bishop as he observed it at first-hand. New visions of education were stimulated, Robinson noted,

On our return in the carriage he suggested the propriety of establishing a seminary here not merely for the Catechists and Schoolmasters, but also for the Native Priesthood, as auxiliary to the objects of Bishop's College, but on a scale of less expense and for the immediate supply of the Peninsula.¹

Although his daily schedule was a full one, the Bishop found time for the social obligations of the colony. He had renewed his acquaintance with the Chief Justice, Sir Ralph Palmer, shortly after his arrival. Accompanied by the Archdeacon and eight of the clergy the Bishop had visited the Regent of the infant Nawab in a call on the Court; following which they had called on the Governor and his wife, Sir Thomas Munro and Lady Munro. The Governor was one of the remarkable group of able Scotsmen then ruling the East for the East India

1 Ibid. p.103.

Company. The Bishop earlier had breakfasted with him, and then had commented in a letter to his wife, "In the course of my conversation with him, I saw many marks of strong and original talent".¹ In the visit with his clergy, he had come to thank Lady Munro, who was leaving for England, for her generous patronage of the Vepery schools. Sir Thomas² was moved to say, after listening to Bishop Heber's expression of gratitude, "My Lord, it will be vain for me after this to preach humility to Lady Munro; she will be proud of this day to the latest hour she lives."³

The Governor had arranged for the Bishop's party to be accompanied by a surgeon, a Mr. Hyne, and a young officer, Captain Harkness, to act as guide and to command the escort. The Bishop preached to two large congregations, on his last Sunday in Madras; his sermon on the text, "He sent them away", given, in the first evening service of St. George's, made a lasting impression on its hearers. On the following afternoon, 13th March, "after a fortnight of great enjoyment as well as exertion", as Robinson recorded in his Journal, the party started on its all night travel. Four days later found them

1 Heber, Reginald - Indian Journal, Vol.II. p.447.

2 Sir Thomas Munro, an Indian administrator who had feared the effect of European and Christian knowledge on the natives, was heard to declare after a short acquaintance with Bishop Heber, that government had done well in sending him to India, since such a man could not fail to strengthen the British power. British Critic, Vol.IV. 1828, p.228.

3 Robinson, Thomas - The Last Days of Bishop Heber, p.115.

at Pondicherry where they were the guests of the French Governor at dinner. The next stop was at Cuddalore, an English station to which government pensioners and invalids, who preferred a residence in India, were "sent to end their days". He preached to the old soldiers and instituted Sunday evening service.

Another night of travel brought the party to Chillumbrum. It was from this place, famed for its tremendous pagoda, that Bishop Heber gave expression to an important letter on the question of the observance or abolition of caste among the native Christian converts. Some of the younger Lutheran ministers had taken a strong position against the maintenance of caste distinctions by native converts to Christianity, especially by the Sudras to the Pariahs. Under the older Schwartz and his immediate successors, these distinctions had been gradually disappearing. The Bishop felt, and no doubt hoped, that in time the distinctions would be entirely forgotten. However, the action of some of the newer missionaries (i.e. making the immediate abolition of every shade of these distinctions an indispensable condition of Christian communion with the existing converts) gave a new importance to the barrier of caste. Christian David, whom the Bishop had ordained, was a convert of the elder Schwartz; and it had been to him that Heber had directed his first enquiry, when he sought to learn the nature of caste and its restrictions¹ His

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II.
pp.222-228.

point of view favoured a middle position, a compromise between the demands of caste and the Christian ethic; the Bishop tended to favour this because its conciliatory nature would provide the greatest harmony within the young Church. However, he was not convinced. His letter, written at Chillumbrum, March 21st, to the Rev.D.Schreivogel, a Danish missionary at Tranquebar, was a letter of enquiry concerning the caste distinctions - whether they were being observed on religious or on civil grounds, when manifested by professing Christians:

in desiring separate seats in Church; in going up at different times to receive the holy communion; in insisting on their children having different sides of the school; in refusing to eat, drink, or associate with those of a different caste.¹

The missionary's previous letter to the Bishop, raising the question of caste observance, had also included questions concerning a number of native customs to which he objected in Christian conduct. Perhaps the unfortunate combination of these complaints, some of which the liberal minded Bishop felt were of little religious importance, had tended to obscure the real issue basic to caste.

Further light on the Bishop's attitude to the problem of caste comes from a conversation of the missionary Schreivogel with Archdeacon Robinson of Madras in 1828, as quoted by Bishop Wilson's biographer:

1 Ibid. pp.399-400.

In regard to the distinction of Caste, his Lordship was not able as yet to form a decided opinion, though after I had communicated to him what I had to say on the subject, he did not think it was so innocent; and he told me he wished to come to the bottom of this disputed question, and would therefore send inquiries to the missionaries of all societies without distinction; and that even then, he would not be guided by the number of votes for or against, but by the strength of the arguments brought forward.¹

The death of Bishop Heber prevented the preparation of any formal report along the lines of research he had indicated. It remained for the fifth Bishop of Calcutta, Daniel Wilson, to gather the information and make the decision, "that if caste was retained, Christianity would be destroyed in India". Both the arguments and the votes were strongly in favour of that position and, on that basis, Bishop Wilson acted.

Although Bishop Heber's mind was not decided on the caste question, the indication is clear that he was searching for the basic truth, and he set a course of action which ultimately led to the decision by the Church. Others had been antagonistic to the principle of Caste before Heber; (Carey and the Baptist Missionaries were, from the beginning of the Mission) but it has been pointed out that Bishop Heber's letter to Schreivogel is the earliest ecclesiastical document which we have, of any consequence, instituting the inquiry as to the exact bearing of one system on the other.² It was at the precise point of

1 Bateman, Josiah - Life of Rgt.Rev.Daniel Wilson, D.D.
Vol.I.p.433.

2 Roberts, Joseph, ed. - Caste Opposed to Christianity.
p. A.

civil and religious distinction that caste had to be seen and understood in relationship to Christianity.

There were two other vexing problems which engaged the attention of the Bishop as he travelled toward Tanjore. The first, concerned the difficulty the clergy had experienced in trying to follow to the letter the canons regarding marriage, as furnished by the first Bishop. The provisions were adapted to a settled country like England, but were not workable for the military in India. Heber referred the whole matter with its peculiar circumstances to the Archbishop of Canterbury for his decision,¹ and notified the Archdeacons that, until further instructions were received, the clergy were

at liberty to celebrate the marriages of military persons, soldiers, female followers of the camp, suttlers, or others subject to martial law, under the rank of commissioned officers, without banns or licence, and by virtue of a written permission signed by the commanding officer of the station, garrison, or detachment to which each soldier or military person belongs.²

This action restored the practice which had been previously followed and eliminated the hardship evoked by orders which were not applicable to the Indian situation.

The other problem with which Heber found himself concerned was a dispute within the Malayalim, or Syro-Jacobite, Churches in Travancore in which he had been asked to act as umpire.³

1 Heber, Reginald - Indian Journal Vol.II. p.430.

2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II. p.406.

3 Heber, Reginald - Indian Journal, Vol.II. p.453.

Recognising the difficulties involved, he nevertheless looked forward to the experience as one offering a valuable insight into the operation of an ancient Church, which appeared to have a close resemblance to a third or fourth century church society.

Amid consideration of the vexatious problems, he found time to answer a letter from C.W.W.Wynn which had asked for his thoughts upon colonization. His reply is a strongly worded protest at the then present rate of taxation, which was "an effectual bar to everything like improvement."

The fact is, no native prince demands the rent which we do; and making every allowance for the superior regularity of our system, etc., I met with very few public men who will not, in confidence, own their belief that the people are overtaxed, and that the country is in a gradual state of impoverishment.....
.....I am convinced that it is only necessary to draw less money from the peasants, and to spend more of what is drawn within the country, to open some door to Indian industry in Europe, and to admit the natives of India to some greater share in the magistracy of their own people, to make this empire as durable as it would be happy.¹

In this letter Heber shows his liberal grasp of the Indian problem and, in so doing, placed himself in the forefront of those far-seeing administrators who devoted their efforts to prepare the people of India for self-government and independence.

1 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II. pp.413-4.

On Good Friday, the 24th March, the Bishop and his party set off at three o'clock in the morning, and arrived at Combaconum at seven, where he preached "to a congregation of twenty or thirty persons, among whom were several Native Christians who understood English." Another night's travel brought them to Tanjore where they were welcomed by the Resident, Captain Fyfe, and his Lady. Tanjore was the site where the well-beloved missionary, the Rev.Christian Frederick Schwartz, had laboured and was buried. His pupil and follower, the Rev.John Kohloff, an elderly man, was there to welcome the Bishop.

On 26th March, Easter Day, the Bishop preached, with all the clergy present assisting in the Service. At the end of the evening service, which was attended by over thirteen hundred natives, he delivered the blessing in Tamil from the altar. It was a thrilling evening for all the missionaries; none was more deeply moved than Reginald Heber, who exclaimed to his Chaplain, as he was assisting him with his robes, "Gladly would I exchange years of common life for one such day as this!" The following day he held a confirmation in the Fort Church; and, in the evening, after a dinner at the Residency for the missionaries and their families, he attended another Tamil service and, in a short simple, heartfelt address, he exhorted the Missionaries and people to fidelity in their high office. Meanwhile, Dr.Hyne, the medical attendant for the Bishop, had been stricken with fever and his condition

became steadily worse. The Bishop had him moved to a room next to his own, so that he could assist him during the night. No more touching scenes of the Bishop's Indian career can be found than these which occurred within a week of the end of his life.

During the days at Tanjore, as he looked back on the experiences of the previous crowded weeks of his visitation in South India, he often observed to his chaplain that,

He had seen the other parts of India and Ceylon, and he had rejoiced in the prospects opened of the extension of Christ's kingdom in many distant places and by many different instruments; but he had seen nothing like the Missions of the South, - for these were the fields most ripe for the harvest.¹

The following days were featured by an exchange of visits by the Bishop and his clergy and the cultured Maharajah Sarabojee who had been a devoted pupil of the venerable Schwartz for twelve years. Dr.Hyne was too ill to travel, but the Bishop promised to wait at the next station for a few days, in case he should be allowed to resume his journey.

Bishop Heber and his party arrived at Trichinopoly on the first of April, where he was welcomed by Mr.Bird, the Judge of the circuit. Its location, as the headquarters of several military units and departments of the civil authorities, made this one of the most important stations of the Madras

1 Robinson, Thomas - The Last Days of Bishop Heber, p.176.

Presidency. While the religious work under the direction of the Chaplain was very satisfactory, the work of the Mission had suffered from a lack of personal supervision by a resident missionary. The Bishop lost no time in receiving the reports concerning the English congregation, schools, and hospitals. The following day, a Sunday, he preached at the government Church; and, in the afternoon, confirmed a group of forty-two of the English congregation. Between services, he spent some time reading and conversing with his Chaplain who had been taken ill after leaving Tanjore.

Early in the morning of April 3rd, shortly after day-break, Reginald Heber went to the mission Church in the fort, where a service in the Tamil language was held and where he confirmed eleven natives in their own language. Nearby, were the English and Tamil schools, and the Mission-house which he visited; after conversing with the members of the congregation and promising to send them a Missionary, he returned to Mr. Bird's residence. Standing by Mr. Robinson's bed, he recounted to him with enthusiasm and animation the activities of his early morning visit.¹ After discussing some plans for the morning, he left to take his usual morning bath. The bath was in a small bungalow separated from the house, containing a deep pool, fifteen feet in length by eight in depth. Full of cool

1 Robinson, Thomas - The Last Days of Bishop Heber, p.183.

water fed by a bubbling spring, it was about six to seven feet in depth, and entered by a flight of stone steps.¹ It was filled, as the Bishop had enjoyed splashing about in it on the two previous mornings.

His servant accompanied him to the bath.....
and he waited outside the door.
 First, he heard the bishop moving about in the water, as when one is swimming; this lasted only about four minutes then all was suddenly quiet. The servant thought his master perhaps was dressing, but when this pause had lasted nearly half an hour, he grew suspicious and knocked at the door; when no answer having been returned, he at last opened it, and found the bishop dead at the bottom of the pool.²

Every possible means of resuscitation were resorted to for a considerable time, "but the vital spark was extinguished and his blessed spirit had then entered on its career of immortality."³ The verdict of the Garrison and Superintendent Surgeons who arrived almost immediately after the alarm had been raised was that his death had been caused by apoplexy.

An eminent medical man of Calcutta,⁴ who had attended the Bishop, indicated that the prelate's life expectancy was shorter than the average, and that he had been cut off by a sudden and merciful stroke. Thus died this faithful servant of God - in the forty-third year of his age - and the third of

1 Bateman, Josiah - The Life of Rgt.Rev.Daniel Wilson, Vol.I. p.478.

2 Bonner, George - Memoir of the Life of Rgt.Rev. Reginald Heber, D.D. p.65. quoted from a private letter (Rev.Nolan?) in Bombay Courier - May 20, 1826.

3 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II. p.437.

4 Probably Dr.Clarke Abel (1780-1826), Physician to Lord Amherst.

his episcopacy, working to the last in the cause that was nearest to his heart.

Lady West soon after her arrival in India had cynically observed, "Here people die one day, and they are buried the next. Their furniture sold on the third, and they are forgotten the fourth." That was not to be the fate of Reginald Heber. The wail of anguish which reverberated through India and across the seas to England and to America was followed by a paean of praise. Chaplain Robinson in his tribute wrote,

Here lies one whom all loved, whom every heart admired and cherished. One to whom the eyes of all India, and of thousands in England, were turned with high-raised expectations of usefulness in the Church of Christ: and how justly! - for his whole soul was filled with intense desire for the glory of his Divine Master.¹

To the aged missionary, Kohloff, it was the loss of a second Schwartz: "If St. Paul had visited the Missions, he could not have done more, excepting only his power of Miracles." Rugged Sir Thomas Munro, in his moving summation of the qualities of Heber, bore testimony for the Presidency and for himself when he said, "He left all who approached him convinced that they had never before seen so rarely gifted a person and that they could never hope to see such a one again. The loss of such a man, so suddenly cut off in the midst of his useful career, is a public calamity." In Trichinopoly, in Madras, in

1 Robinson, Thomas - The Last Days of Bishop Heber, p.182.

Bombay, in Colombo, in Calcutta; public meetings were held, at which the Governor-General, the Governors, the Chief Justices, and the Commander-in-Chief gave voice to the general sorrow, and raised funds for worthy memorials to Reginald Heber. The two great Missionary Societies followed the lead of Bombay and Ceylon in endowing Heber scholarships for native Indian and foreign Asiatic students in Bishop's College.

It was not until early in September, over four months after the tragic event, that the news reached England. Maria Leycester, in her grief, expressed to Augustus Hare the thought which many were echoing, "This is one of those mysterious dispensations in which nothing but an unlimited faith can avail us anything. Here is no selfish grief: the public loss seems almost more than the private one." The many friends of Reginald Heber at Oxford invited subscriptions for a movement "to perpetuate those feelings of admiration and esteem which are well known to prevail in the Kingdom at large, and to transmit to posterity a record of his eminent propagation of Christianity in India." The suggestion of C.W.W.Wynn led to the memorial fund being opened to the people of Britain, which resulted in Chantrey's colossal figure of Reginald Heber in the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, London. The monument in Hodnet Church bears an inscription written by Robert Southey. All Souls College, Oxford, possesses a Chantrey head of Heber, which gravely smiles at students passing through the entry hall to the Codrington Library; the portrait, painted by

Phillips, R.A., before the Bishop sailed for India; and a stained glass window of Heber, which is one of a "Series of Worthies", not replaced since World War Two. Late in the nineteenth century, a large stained glass window was dedicated to his memory in St.Oswald's, Malpas, the church of his boyhood. The most poignant of all reminders of Reginald Heber is found at Hodnet Hall, among some of his letters and sermon manuscripts. The sermon he preached on "The Omnipresence of God", at the consecration of the Church of Secrole, near Benares, 5th August, 1825, had been printed, and Reginald had sent a copy of it home to his mother. The flyleaf of this copy contains this inscription in his mother's writing:

Mary Heber, from her dear and honoured Son, this, his farewell gift - This his dear remembrance: received fourteen days after she had the account of his death - shall be very constantly meditated upon till that awful hour when the curtain shall be drawn aside to his now poor afflicted Mother.¹

This moving sentiment bears evidence of the emotion in which it was penned.

Monuments, glass windows and scholarships are, at best, but indications of how the one honoured was held in respect and admiration by his contemporaries; and they, in time, can lose their significance for new generations. The towering statue of Bishop Heber confirming the youth of India, by

1 Heber-Percy Collection.

Chantrey, which was the expression of the love of his friends, is now in a far corner of the Dean's aisle of St. Paul's, noticed only by the passing ecclesiastics. It no longer serves to remind the worshippers of the selfless devotion and sacrifice of the brilliant young churchman, and his part in the building of the Church in India.

His sun was in its meridian power; and its warmth most genial, when it was suddenly eclipsed for ever.¹

In the short span of Heber's days in India, he made a tremendous impact upon the Christian life of that country. Bishop's College, founded by his predecessor, was completed, and its life-time of service assured, through his concern and efforts for its financial stability. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel was established in Bombay, Ceylon, and Calcutta, through his preaching and planning, with the assistance of the Archdeacons. The Madras Society, which he had planned to organize upon his return, before sailing to Calcutta, was formed shortly after the news of his death reached that city. His cultured, liberal attitude, and abiding spirituality, won and held friends in all ranks and walks of life. The most avowed and persevering opponents of missionary undertakings consented, under his influence, to become members of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.

1 Robinson, Thomas - The Last Days of Bishop Heber, p.237.

The record of Bishop Heber's service to the Church is not limited to these tangible evidences, but shows, to a much greater degree, the impress of his personality and spirit upon the clergy, the missionaries, the English government and civil officials, the Indian princes, and the natives.

The normal growth of the Church, in its first nine years, was impeded by the failure to clarify the power of the Bishop to ordain new ministers. This deficiency, Bishop Heber had arranged to have corrected before he left England for his overseas diocese. With him, began the native ministry of the young ecclesiastical establishment. No other official act in his administration provided him with such joy, for, in his far-seeing churchmanship, he envisioned a native Church of the future.

Reginald Heber believed the Bishopric to be the master-spring of the Church movement, not merely a controlling power. It was this dynamic concept which motivated him on his visitations and inspired his clergy. As he expressed it in his charge to the clergy:

I am anxious that all should be convinced that, in their Ordinary, they have a fellow-servant and a friend, actuated by the same general principles, confessing the same faith, and having the same great objects continually in view; who is only desirous to forward their labours of love by the aid of such experience as he possesses, and to prove to them, experimentally, that for the most ardent zeal, and for activity the most incessant, enough and more than enough of room is afforded by the

closest principles of Church union, and the most cautious adherence to the canons and constitutions of that Church to which we profess allegiance.¹

With this high aim in mind, he had visited almost every station where a Christian Church could be assembled, engaging himself **not** only in the higher functions of his office, but in the more humble and laborious duties of an ordinary pastor. It was this radiant example of self-giving which prompted one of the elder missionaries to remark feelingly,

This is the golden age of the Church restored, this is indeed the spirit of a primitive Bishop.²

Another one commented, "Is this the nineteenth century or the first?" Zeal according to knowledge was a distinctive trait of Reginald Heber. As a contemporary of his aptly expressed it,

In Bishop Heber's character we have the colder rays of philosophy glowing with the warmth of religious feeling; and, on the other hand, the heat of zeal happily tempered by a catholic spirit of toleration for the errors and sympathy with the virtues of humanity.

He earnestly seized on every occasion of conciliation towards the other Christian Communities of the East. He joyfully opened a communication with the Syrian churches of Malabar; anxiously encouraged the Armenian clergy; and made

1 Heber, Reginald - Sermons Preached in India, p.25.

2 Robinson, Thomas - The Last Days of Bishop Heber, p.16.

3 Potter, J.R. - Essays on the Lives of Cowper, Newton, and Heber, p.114.

proposals for translating the liturgy into Armenian.

Much emphasis has been placed upon Bishop Heber's contribution to the Indian Church as "chief missionary to the East". This achievement is not to be denied, but, in evaluating his churchmanship, one should view it as only one facet of his shining radiance. His powerful and persuasive influence on behalf of missions, in India, and at home in England, was but one phase of a more comprehensive position which he was called upon to fill as Second Lord Bishop of Calcutta. This all-important, commanding role was that of "conciliator-general". The life and interests of Reginald Heber had prepared him for the challenge of India, with its dissension and divisions being manifested in all aspects of its social, racial, national and religious life. Even the struggling young Church had imported its party-strife from England to encumber it in its efforts to preach and exemplify the unifying gospel of the Saviour. That this was Heber's specific role is revealed in the words of his successor, Bishop James,

his it was, to conciliate, to soothe, to subdue: it was his to win over, by his openness and frankness of manner, all that had else beset his path; and to unite all those varying discordant humours, that too often arise to perplex and confound the zealous advocate of the Christian Cause; while by the splendour of his talents, he kindled a new flame, and all around him were incited to shew a sympathy with a mind like that of Heber.¹

1 Missionary Register, June 1827, p.272.

In recommending Dr. James to His Majesty the King, George IV, for appointment to the See of Calcutta, C.W.W. Wynn wrote of him,

who seems particularly fitted to pursue the steps of Bishop Heber by the conciliation and mildness of his temper.¹

In his encompassing role as "conciliator-general", Bishop Heber was spectacularly successful. Unanimous testimony may be quoted for this statement from the clergy within the Church and those labouring in other communions; from the Government and Company officials; and from the natives with whom he had been associated. Innumerable tributes were made public, testifying to the success of his spirit of conciliation. It was Dr. Bryce, of the Scottish Presbyterians, who summed up the feeling of British, American and Indian Christians:

And he proved himself, by the warm interest he took in every scheme to promote the Gospel, not a bishop of the Church of England only, but a bishop of the Church of Christ.²

When Chaplain Claudius Buchanan of the East India Company wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1805, pleading for the establishment of the Church in India, he asked for a head of the Church who would be:

A venerable personage, whose name shall be greater than that of transitory governors of the land; and whose fame for piety, and for the will and power to do good, may pass throughout every region.³

1 The Letters of George IV, Vol.III. p.214.

2 Heber, Amelia - Life of Reginald Heber, D.D. Vol.II. p.469.

3 Pearson, Hugh - Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Rev. Claudius Buchanan, D.D. Vol.I. p.377.

In the example and administration of Bishop Reginald Heber, this exalted wish was fulfilled. The finest contemporary estimate of the personality and character of this liberal Churchman was given by Catherine Stanley, wife of the Rev. Edward Stanley (later Bishop of Norwich), and elder sister of Maria Leycester. It makes an important contribution to our thinking about Heber as the conciliator-general:

Conciliation is usually the allotted task of lukewarm, mild, gentle spirits, whose incapacity for great exertion is counter-balanced by their usefulness in this line; but here it rested on a higher basis, here it was combined with the very zeal which usually carries it to the other extreme.¹

Neither a member of the High Churchmen nor the Evangelical party, he was admired and respected by both. He, whose first love had been poetry, came to the full development of his powers as a man of action. Reginald Heber was an ideal bishop; energetic, zealous, tactful, wise and loveable.

Heber's contribution to the life of the Church of India, like his fifteen year ministry in the rural village of Hodnet in England, may be a closed chapter of history, to which few people ever turn to refresh their memories or to become acquainted with the details of the life of one of England's

1 Vide Appendix 13 - "Estimate of Reginald Heber", by Catherine Stanley.²

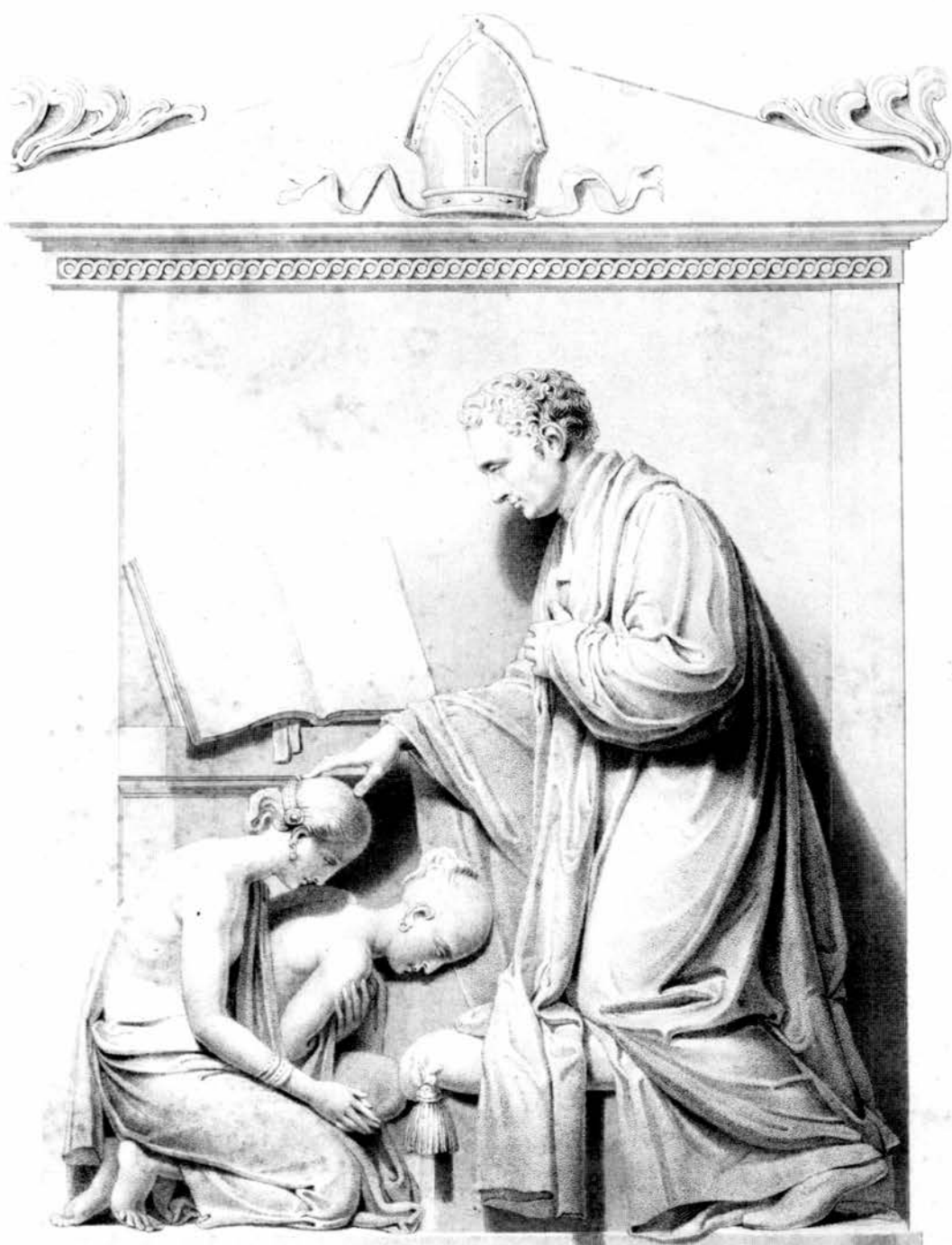
2 Stanley, A.P. - Memoirs of Edward and Catherine Stanley, pp.198-200.

Worthies of the Georgian period.¹ Yet, every Sunday in this Twentieth Century, in myriad of Christian Churches of all communions in the English speaking world, people will turn in their hymnals and lift their voices in the inspiration of one of Reginald Heber's living poems. The voice and spirit of Reginald Heber, poet, preacher and churchman, still speaks to the needs of all classes and races of mankind, for whom he lived and gave his life as did the Master whom he served.

"For thee the fairest garland shall be twin'd,
The Christian's palm and poet's wreath combin'd."

- G.A.Vetch -

1 Thackeray, William Makepeace - The Four Georges.
Vol.XXIII, p.120.



Praise! for yet one more name, with power endow'd
To cheer and guide us onward as we press;
Yet one more image, on the heart bestow'd,
To dwell there - beautiful in holiness!
Thine, Heber, thine! whose mem'ry from the dead
Shines as the star which to the Saviour led.

- Felicia Dorothea Hemans -

APPENDIX

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Brasenose Ale Verse

by

Reginald Heber.

Attend, ye freshmen, to my tale,
And do not me mistake,
I sing the praise of College ale,
For Mr.Barker's¹ sake.

Oh! may my verse be strong and clear
To spread its glory wider,
Not windy, like to bottle beer,
As gripe-compelling cyder.

But clear as amber, bright as gold,
That all men may admire,
While I in lofty terms unfold
The fame of our Entire.

When Bacchus through the Indian land
Pursued his conquering way,
He held a hop-pole in his hand,
And rode upon a dray.

Some tabby cats his chariot drew,
(I construe thus the Greek)
For Ale ('twas thus the proverb grew)
Can make a cat to speak.

Lord how the negroes stared to see,
And wondered much to hear,
His smockless nymphs with tuneful glee,
Proclaim the praise of beer.

Some talk how sweet, how rich, Tokay,
I do not mean to doubt it,
But since I can't afford to pay
Content myself without it.

I love not Gin I love not Rum
I laugh at Port and Sherry
With Ale I feel my spirits come
And all my heart strings merry.

1 Mr Barker - the Butler of the College.

Ah me, how many a ruby face
 Well crammed with Ale and knowledge
 In days of yore was seen to grace
 The Chapel of our College.

We now, alas! a graceless crew,
 Esteem our fathers fools,
 Indulge in Port and Claret, too,
 And laugh at Ale and Rules.

Yet still within this learned dome
 Its wishes much avail;
 You call in vain - no porters come
 Unless you give them Ale.

St. Mary's bells with joyful din
 Our new made fellows hail,
 They care not who may lose or win,
 They ring but for the Ale.

If workmen, you complain, are slow
 To make them work the quicker,
 But bid them to the Buttery go,
 And take a draught of liquor.

Then each resolve with pot in hand
 To make a goodly cheer
 And drink as long as we can stand
 To Brasenose and its beer.

I wish (to close my humble verse)
 Our present Tap were ended
 Our liquor never can be worse
 And may perhaps be mended.¹

1 Brasenose Ale - A collection, p. 2a, b, & c.

A Ballad

(An Old and Approved Receipt for Raising the Devil -)

by

Reginald Heber.

1. Attend ye gay dames to the tale I am telling
Of proud Dinas Bran, and the wealthy Llewellyn
Whose heart was intent upon witchcraft and evil
And he never could sleep but he dreamt of the Devil.
2. True, the soul of Llewellyn was glad beyond measure
As he clomb to his turret, and hung o'er his treasure
His vassals thronged round obsequious in duty
And bright was the morn of his Imogen's beauty
But he swore that the pleasures of life he would spurn all
Could he compass a sight of Highness Infernal.
3. He turned o'er the books of his Elders in sin
And found that with murder he first must begin
So the Vicar he slew, nor with Hell was he daunted
For who could fear Hell, who wished to be haunted.
4. He plucked off the wig with his homicide hands
And he muttered fell charms as he tore off his bands,
And he severed the head as the head of a Swine,
And dire was the snort of the groaning divine,
Then he soused the broad cheeks in a Caldron so hot
Till the Vicar-Broth bubbled and boiled in the Pot.
5. Three lingring days in the magical kettle
He allowed the last lees of the numscull to settle
Then bade the warm breath of the pestilent Sun
To bleach the dire grave-wax which death had begun.
6. He stirred with his dagger, the strong smelling tub
And Oh! with what transport he turned up a grub.
He caught the dear reptile, and kissed it and nursed it
And laid it up warm in a stocking of worsted
And bade it increase till my tale to cut short all
It grew to a Dragon whose poison was mortal.

7. What hoping, what hissing, what fearing, what grinning
As Llewellyn the life of the Dragon was winning
The Monster was grim, but the Baron was wise
And he caught at the nape of his neck by surprise
Then in hopes of the prize that awaited his courage
He stewed the poor Serpent once more into porridge.
8. With fat of the Hell-Broth so green and so damp
And so winding-sheet wick, and a scull for a lamp
And the hinge of a Coffin for knife and for fork
He supped on a horrible meal of raw Pork.
9. His breath it came thick, and his hair bristled high
As the hour of the fiend's assignation drew nigh.
And he wished yet he durst not adventure to pray,
Then turned in despair from the Altar away
And the moon was gone down and the shadows were deep
And the groans of the murdered seemed round him to creep
And the phantoms were seen thro' the lamplight to flit,
And he saw - what, the Devil? - The Devil a bit!¹

1 Heber, Reginald - A Ballad.

The Whippiad - A Satirical Poem
By Reginald Heber, afterwards Bishop of Calcutta.

Canto 1st.

Soph. A; 243.

Where whiten'd (1) Cain the curse of Heav'n defies,
And leaden slumbers seal his brother's Eyes;
Where o'er the Porch in Brazen splendour glows
The vast projection of the mystic Nose; (2)
(Triumph e'er while of Bacon's fabled arts),
Now well hung symbol of our Students parts,
Mid those unhallowed walls, those gloomy cells,
Where everything but contemplation, dwells,
Dire was the feud our sculptured Alfred (3) saw,
And thy grim bearded bust, Erigena! (4)
When Scouts came flocking from the entry hall,
And porters trembled at the Doctor's call,
Ah! called in vain! with laughs suppressed they stood
And bit their nails, a dirty-fingered Brood!
E'en Looker (5) gloried in his Master's plight,
And John (6) beheld, and chuckled, at the sight.
Genius of discord! thou whose murky flight,
With iron pinions more obscured the night,
Thou two of British blood, that dost reside;
In Syms's (7) or in Goodwin's blushing tide!
Say, spirit, say, (for thy fav'rite's soul),
From what dread cause began the bloodless fray,
Pregnant with shame, with laughter and dismay.

Calm was the night, and all was sunk to rest,
Save Rawstone's party, and the Doctor's breast,
He saw with pain, his ancient glory fled,
And dark oblivion, gath'ring round his head,
Alas! no more his pupils crowding came,
To wait indignant in their Tyrant's room, (8)
No more in Hall the flutt'ring theme he tears,
Nor lolling picks his teeth at morning pray'rs;
Unheard, unseen, on dogs he vents his hate,
And drives the terriers from the guarded Gate.
But now, to listless indolence a prey,
Stretch'd on his couch, he dull and darkling lay,
So, not unlike in Venom, or in Size,
Close in his hall the hungry spider lies;
"But oh", he cries "am I so powerless grown,"
"That I am feared by Cooks and Scouts alone,"
"Oh for some noble strife some senior Foe,"
"To swell by his defeat the name of Toe."
He spoke: The powers of mischief heard his cries,
And steeped in solemn sleep his rheumy Eyes,

He slept, but rested not, his Guardian sprite,
 Rose to his view in visions of the night
 And thus, with many a tear and many a Sigh,
 He heard, or seem'd to hear, his limping demon cry (9)
 "Is this a time for distant strife to pray,"
 "While all thy power is melting fast away,"
 "Like Mists desolving in the beams of day?"
 "When Masters dare their ancient rights resume,"
 "And bold intruders fill the Common room,"
 "Whilst thou, poor wretch, despis'd, and shunn'd by all,"
 "Must pick thy commons in the empty hall,"
 "Nay more, regardless of thy rules and thee,"
 "They spurn the ancient frugal hour of three,"
 "Good Heavens! at four (10) their sumptuous feast is spread,"
 "And Farrer lords it at the table head,"
 "See Fellows benches sleeveless striplings bear," (11)
 "While Smith and Sutton (12) from the Canvas Stare"
 "Heard'st thou thro' all this consecrated ground,"
 "The rattling whips unwonted clangor sound?"
 "Awake! arise! tho' many a danger lowr,"
 "By one great deed to vindicate thy power."
 He ceased, and loud the fated whip resounds,
 With throbbing heart the eager Doctor bounds
 So when some bear, from Russia's climes conveyed,
 Politer grown, has learned the dancer's trade,
 If weary with his toil, perchance he hears,
 His Master's whip reechoing in his ears,
 Though loathe, he lifts his paws, and bounds in air,
 And hops, and rages, while the rabble stare.

Canto 2nd.

"You the great toe of this assembly"
 "I the great toe? why the great toe?"
 "For that being the lowest, basest, poorest
 "Thou goest foremost" - Coriolanus -

Forth from his cell the wilely warrior hies,
 And swift to seize the unwary victim flies,
 For sure he deemed since now declining day,
 Had dimmed the brightness of his visual ray,
 He deemed on helpless, undergraduate foes,
 To purge the bile that in his liver rose,
 Fierce schemes of vengeance in his bosom swell,
 Jobations dire, and in positions fell,
 And now across he'd meditate and swear,
 Six ells (13) of Virgil should the fault repair.
 Along the grass with eager haste he trod,
 And with unequal footsteps pressed the Sod,

That hallowed sod, that consecrated ground,
 By Eclogues, fines and crosses, fenced around,
 When low he sees, but scarcely can believe,
 His destined victim wears a Master's Sleeve
 So when those Heroes, Britain's pride and care,
 Through dark Batavia's meadows urged the war
 Oft as they roamed, in bogs, and darkness, lost,
 They found a Frenchman, what they deemed a post,
 The doctor saw, and filled with wild amaze,
 He fixed on Port (14) his quick, convulsive, gaze,
 Thus shrunk the trembling thief when first he saw,
 Hung high in air the waving Abershaw,
 Thus the pale bawd, with agonizing heart,
 Shrinks when she hears the Beadle's rumbling cart;
 "And oh! what sounds," he cries, "what hands unblest,"
 "Presume to break a Senior's (15) holy rest,"
 "Full well you know, who thus my anger dare,"
 "To horsewhips what antipathy I bear;"
 "Shall I in vain immersed in Logic lore,"
 "Oer Sanderson, and Aldrick, try to pour,"
 "I, who the minor to the major join,"
 "And prove conclusively that seven's not nine,"
 "With expectation big, and hope elate,"
 "The critic would my learned labours wait,"
 "And shall not Strabo, then respect command,"
 "And shall not Strabo stay th'insulting hand,"
 "Strabo, whose pages eighteen (16) years and more,"
 "Have been my public shame and private bore?"
 "Hence to thy room audacious wretch retire,"
 "Nor hope thy sleeves can screen thee from my ire."
 He spoke, such fury sparkled in his face,
 The Buttery trembled to its tottering base,
 The frightened rats in corners laid them down,
 And all but Port was daunted at his frown
 Firm, and intrepid, stood the reverend man,
 And thrice he stroaked his chin and thus began,
 "And Hopest thou, then" the injured Bernard said
 "To launch thy thunders at a Master's head?"
 "O, wont to deal the trope and launch the fist,"
 "Half learned logician, half formed Pugilist!"
 "Censor impure, who durst with slanderous aim,"
 "And envy's dart, assault a Harpur's name!"
 "Senior self called, can I forget the day,"
 "When tit'ring undergraduates mocked thy sway,"
 "And drove thee foaming from the hall away!"
 "Gods! with what raps the conscious tables rang"
 "From ev'ry bench how shrill the Cuckoo sang (17)
 "Oh Sounds unblest! oh sounds of deadliest fear."
 "Harsh to the Tutors, and the Lovers Ear."
 "This hint perchance thy warmest hopes may quell"
 "And Cuckoo mingle with the thoughts of Bell -" (18)

At that loved name with fury doubly keen
 Swift on the Deacon rush'd the raging being
 Nor less the dauntless Deacon dared withstand
 The brandished weight of Toe's uplifted hand
 The Ghosts of Themes departed that of yore
 (Disgrac'd alike) the Doctor praised or tore
 On paper wings flit dimly thro' the night
 And hov'ring low in air behold the fight
 Each ill starr'd verse its filthy den forsakes
 Black from the spit or reeking from the jakes
 The Blot stained troop their shadowy pages spread
 And call for vengeance on their Murderer's head -

Canto 3rd.

Digito male pertinaci - Hor.

Shade (19) of Boileau who told in deathless lays
 A Choral pulpits military praise,
 Thou too that dar'dst a cloister'd warfare sing
 And dip thy bucket in Castalia's spring.
 Forgive blest bards if with unequal fire
 I feebly strike the imitative lyre
 Tho' strung to celebrate no vulgar fray
 Since Port and conquest swell the exalting lay
 Not link'd - alas in Friendship's sacred band
 With hands fast locked the furious parsons stand
 Each grasps the whip with unrelenting might
 The whip the cause the guerdon of the fight.
 But either warrior spends his rage in vain
 And panting draws his lengthened breath again
 Till now the Dean with throat extended wide
 And falt'ring shout for speedy succour cried.
 "Scouts, Porters, Shoeblacks whatso'er your trade"
 "All all attend your Master's fist to aid". (21)
 They heard his voice and trembling at the sound
 The half breeced legions swarmed like moths around
 But Ah! the half breech'd legions call'd in vain
 Dismay'd and useless fill the 'encumber'd plain.
 For whilst on servile aid the doctor calls
 By Port subverted prone to earth he falls (22)
 E'en then were heard (so Brazenose students sing)
 The grass plot chains (23) in boding notes to ring
 E'en then were marked where gleaming thro' the night
 Aerial crosses shed a lurid light.
 Those wrestlers too whom naked we behold
 Thro' many a Summer's heat and winter's cold
 Now chang'd appear: his pristine languor fled
 Expiring Abel raised his sinking head

While with fix'd eyes his Murd'rer seem'd to stand
 The bone half dropping from his useless hand
 So when of old as Latian records tell
 At Pompey's base the laurell'd despot fell
 Reviving freedom mock'd her sinking foe
 And Demons shrieked as Brutus dealt the blow.
 His trencher bonnet tumbling from his crown
 Subdued by Bernard sunk the Doctor down
 But yet though breathless on the hostile plain
 The whip he could not seize he snapped in twain
 "Where now base Themester" (24) Port triumphant said
 And wav'd the rattling fragments o'er his head
 "Where now thy threats? yet learn from one to know"
 "How glorious 'tis to spare a fallen foe"
 "Uncudgelled rise, yet hear my high command"
 "Hence to thy rooms or dread thy conqueror's hand"
 His hair all gravel and all green his clothes (25)
 In doleful dumps the downcast Doctor rose
 Then slunk unpitied from the hated plain
 And inward groaning sought his couch again
 Yet as he went he backward cast his view
 And bade his ancient power a last adieu -
 So when some sturdy swain thro' miry roads
 A grunting porker to the market goads
 With twisted neck splash'd hide a progress slow
 Oft backward looks the swine and half disdains to go
 "Ah me how fall'n" with choking sobs he said
 And sunk exhausted on his welcome bed
 "E'er yet my fame wide circling through the town"
 "Spreads from the strong contagion of the gown"
 "O! be it mine unknowing and unknown"
 "With Deans deceased to sleep beneath the cloister'd
 stone" (26)
 While tearful thus and half convulsed with spite
 He lengthened out with plaints the livelong night (27)
 At that still hour when dreams are oft'nest true
 A well known spectre rose before his view
 As in some lake when hush'd is every breeze
 The bending ape his form reflected sees
 Such and so like the Doctor's Angel shone
 And by his gait the guardian sprite was known
 Benignly bending o'er his aching head
 "Sleep Henry sleep my best beloved" he said
 "Soft dreams of bliss shall sooth thy midnight hour"
 "Connubial transports and collegiate power"
 "Fly fast ye months till Henry shall receive"
 "The joys a wife and benefice can give"
 "But first to sanction thy prophetic name"
 "In yon tall pile a Doctor's honours claim"
 "E'en now methinks the awe-struck crowd behold" (29)
 "Thy powder'd caxon and thy cane of Gold"

"E'en now - but hark the chimney sparrows sing"
 "St.Mary's chimes their early matins ring"
 "I go - but tho' thro' many a festive night"
 "Collegiate bards shall chaunt thy luckless fight"
 "Tho' many a jest shall spread the tables round"
 "And many a bowl to Bernard's health be crowned"
 "O'er juniors still maintain thy dread command"
 "Still boast my son thy cross compelling hand"
 "Adieu" - his shadowy robes the phantom spread
 And o'er the Doctor drowsy influence shed
 Scared at the charm far off his terrors flew
 And Love and Hope once more his curtain drew -

Annotations upon the Whippiad

- (1) Those who have heard that Cain was struck black will be surprised to find him in Brasenose as white as innocence.
- (2) All the world has rung with the fame of Roger Bacon (formerly of this college) and of his exploits in Astronomy, Chemistry, and Metallurgy inter alia his brazen Head of which the nose alone remain a precious relique and (to use the words of the excellent author of the Oxford Guide) still conspicuous over the portal where it erects itself as a symbolical illustration of the Salernian adage "Noscitur a naso"
- (3) & (4) Two medallions of Alfred and Erigena - ornament the outside of the hall so as to overlook the field of Battle. Erigena was the first chopper of logic in the university.
- (5) Looker the porter.
- (6) John the Doctor's servant
- (7) Two wine merchants
- (8) To those Gentlemen who for half an hour together have had the honour of waiting in the Doctor's antichamber "donce libeat(e) vigilare tyranno" this passage will need no explanation and of his arts of graceful dignity and unaffected piety in Chapel the less that is said the better -
- (9) It was Rosicrucian tenet, that the Demon was assimilated to the object of his care; And in this we are confirmed by the authority of the Doctor himself who treated very largely on the subject of Demons in his lectures on Plato's Phadon - The powers of his mind were never more successfully displayed than when he illustrated his position by the scriptural instance of the two Galilean Demoniacs who abode in the tombs night and day. It was

reserved for his ingenuity and learning to discover that those unfortunate Bedlamites were not mortals but departed spirits.

(10) The real friend of collegiate discipline whose feelings our Author would blush to offend will be pleased to recollect that this deviation from the usual dinner hour took place in the long vacation: that it was introduced for the convenience of study; and that the Doctor could he have so far forgot his dignity as to have joined the 4 o'clock party would have found decorous manners, and more than one Brother Fellow of the Company -

(11) Wisely it was ordained by our founders that young men being too apt to laugh in their sleeves at the conduct of their betters, the academical days of undergraduates should as far as possible obviate that inconvenience - Thus also Tully had it "Cedant Arma Togo".

(12) The two founders of Brasenose College.

(13) To explain this expression we refer the reader to the most preposterous imposition ever known in the annals of Collegiate punishment - The original MS. of which is preserved in the museum of an eminent collector in Kent - in short, as in Cambridge they sell their butter by the yard, so at Brasenose the cloth measure has been applied with singular success to the works of genius; and perhaps the system may be so far improved upon that a future undergraduate may have to toil through a furlong of Strabo or a (indecipherable) of Logic. -

(14) The Reverend Bernard Port.

(15) Prophetically spoken as the Doctor was then only a junior fellow -

(16) The Doctor finding that Horace prescribed a nine years delay for a play or a poem inferred that more than twice the number were necessary for the learned labours of an editor of Strabo.

(17) For the wonderful answers of the learned Cuckoo at logic lecture we refer to hs (the Cuckoo's) equally edified class fellows.

(18) The reader will perhaps be astonished to find that the doctor was supposed to flatter himself with the hope that his attentions were not altogether unacceptable to a young lady of singular elegance and personal accomplishments here alluded to "Hoc olim fuerunt tempora" -

(19) The poet invokes his Heroi-comic predecessors the author of the Lutin and Alessandro Tossone whose Leechin rapita or rape of the Bucket is well known to amateurs of Italian poetry -

(20) No classical stranger could ever pass the porter in his days at Brasenose without being sensibly reminded of a fav'rite passage in Horace and exclaiming -

Inis multa gracilis - puer in rosa
Perfusus liquidis - ordibus
Grato - sub antro

(21) Thrones, dominations, pryncedoms, Virtues, Powers. Milton.

(22) Procumbil humi Bos -

(23)

(24) With great practical justice and classical elegance are the assailants words retorted upon himself -

(25)

(26) Dead Deans broken bottles delapidated lanthorns and ungraduated ladders and other lumber have generally found their level under the pavement of Brasenose Cloisters.

(27) Like Virgil's nightingale or owl
Ferali carmine Bubo
Flet noctem,

(28) Post mediam visus noctem cum Somnia vera -

(29) We have heard it whispered but cannot undertake to vouch for the truth that a considerable wager now depends upon the accomplishment of this prophecy within three months after the Doctor has obtained a bona fide degree - .¹

1 Heber, Reginald - The Whippiad. (Above is given a transcript of a handwritten copy recently acquired by the Brasenose Library. It has the name of A.C.Ferrar on the flyleaf and is dated 1812 with initials "A.F." It was given by A.C.Ferrar to a friend in 1837.

Some four or five hand-written copies are known to exist. Blackwood's Magazine, July 1843, first published it with a short introduction and with

explanatory notes signed "K". The only other printed version is in "The Brazen Nose" A College Magazine Vol.1, 1909-1914 Oxford Univ. - of Nov.1910, p.97. This text made by A.J.Ram, K.C. (a great-nephew of the hero of the poem, the Rev. Bernard Port) was compiled from a careful examination of four different copies.

Palestine
by
Reginald Heber

Reft of thy sons, amid thy foes forlorn,
Mourn, widow'd Queen, forgotten Sion, mourn!
Is this thy place, sad City, this thy throne,
Where the wild desert rears its craggy stone?
While suns unblest their angry lustre fling,
And way-worn pilgrims seek the scanty spring? -
Where now thy pomp, which kings with envy view'd?
Where now thy might, which all those kings subdu'd?
No martial myriads muster in thy gate;
No suppliant nations in thy Temple wait;
No prophet bards, thy glittering courts among,
Wake the full lyre, and swell the tide of song:
But lawless Force, and Meagre Want is there,
And the quick-darting eye of restless Fear,
While cold Oblivion, 'mid thy ruins laid,
Folds his dank wing beneath the ivy shade.

Ye guardian saints! ye warrior sons of heaven,
To whose high care Judaea's state was given!
O wont of old your nightly watch to keep,
A host of gods, on Sion's towery steep!
If e'er your secret footsteps linger still
By Siloa's fount, or Tabor's echoing hill;
If e'er your song on Salem's glories dwell,
And mourn the captive land you lov'd so well;
(For oft, 'tis said, in Kedron's palmy vale
Mysterious harpings swell the midnight gale,
And, blest as balmy dew that Hermon cheer,
Melt in soft cadence on the pilgrim's ear);
Forgive, blest spirits, if a theme so high
Mock the weak notes of mortal minstrelsy!
Yet, might your aid this anxious breast inspire
With one faint spark of Milton's seraph fire,
Then should my Muse ascend with bolder flight,
And wave her eagle-plumes exulting in the light.

O happy once in heaven's peculiar love,
Delight of men below, and saints above!
Though, Salem, now the spoiler's ruffian hand
Has loos'd his hell-hounds o'er thy wasted land;
Though weak, and whelm'd beneath the storms of fate;
Thy house is left unto thee desolate;

Though thy proud stones in cumbrous ruin fall,
 And seas of sand o'ertop thy mould'ring wall;
 Yet shall the Muse to Fancy's ardent view
 Each shadowy trace of faded pomp renew:
 And as the seer on Pisgah's topmost brow
 With glist'ning eye beheld the plain below,
 With prescient ardour drank the scented gale,
 And bade the op'ning glades of Canaan hail;
 Her eagle eye shall scan the prospect wide,
 From Carmel's cliffs to Almotana's tide;
 The flinty waste, the cedar-tufted hill,
 The liquid health of smooth Ardeni's rill;
 The grot, where, by the watch-fire's evening blaze,
 The robber riots, or the hermit prays;
 Or where the tempest rives the hoary stone,
 The wintry top of giant Lebanon.

Fierce, hardy, proud, in conscious freedom bold,
 Those stormy seats the warrior Druses hold;
 From Norman blood their lofty line they trace,
 Their lion courage proves their generous race.
 They, only they, while all around them kneel
 In sullen homage to the **Thracian** steel,
 Teach their pale despot's waning moon to fear
 The patriot terrors of the mountain spear.

Yes, valorous chiefs, while yet your sabres shine,
 The native guard of feeble Palestine,
 O, ever thus, by no vain boast dismay'd,
 Defend the birthright of the cedar shade!
 What though no more for you th' obedient gale
 Swells the white bosom of the Tyrian sail;
 Though now no more your glitt'ring marts unfold
 Sidonian dyes and Lusitanian gold;
 Though not for you the pale and sickly slave
 Forgets the light in Ophir's wealthy cave;
 Yet yours the lot, in proud contentment blest,
 Where cheerful labour leads to tranquil rest.
 No robber rage the ripening harvest knows;
 And unrestrain'd the generous vintage flows:
 Nor less your sons to manliest deeds aspire,
 And Asia's mountains glow with Spartan fire.

So when, deep sinking in the rosy main,
 The western Sun forsakes the Syrian plain,
 His watery rays refracted lustre shed,
 And pour their latest light on Carmel's head.

Yet shines your praise, amid surrounding gloom,
 As the lone lamp that trembles in the tomb:
 For few the souls that spurn a tyrant's chain,
 And small the bounds of freedom's scanty reign.

As the poor outcast on the cheerless wild,
 Arabia's parent, clasp'd her fainting child,
 And wander'd near the roof, no more her home,
 Forbid to linger, yet afraid to roam:
 My sorrowing Fancy quits the happier height,
 And southward throws her half-averted sight.
 For sad the scenes Judæa's plains disclose,
 A dreary waste of undistinguish'd woes:
 See War untir'd his crimson pinions spread,
 And foul Revenge that tramples on the dead!
 Lo, where from far the guarded fountains shine,
 Thy tents, Nebaioth, rise, and Kedar, thine!
 'Tis yours the boast to mark the stranger's way,
 And spur your headlong chargers on the prey,
 Or rouse your nightly numbers from afar,
 And on the hamlet pour the waste of war;
 Nor spare the hoary head, nor bid your eye
 Revere the sacred smile of infancy.
 Such now the clans, whose fiery coursers feed
 Where waves on Kishon's bank the whisp'ring reed;
 And theirs the soil, where, curling to the skies,
 Smokes on Samaria's mount her scanty sacrifice;
 While Israel's sons, by scorpion curses driven,
 Outcasts of earth, and reprobate of heaven,
 Through the wide world in friendless exile stray,
 Remorse and shame sole comrades of their way,
 With dumb despair their country's wrongs behold,
 And, dead to glory, only burn for gold.

O Thou, their Guide, their Father, and their Lord,
 Lov'd for Thy mercies, for Thy power ador'd!
 If at Thy Name the waves forgot their force,
 And refluent Jordan sought his trembling source;
 If at Thy Name like sheep the mountains fled,
 And haughty Sirion bow'd his marble head; --
 To Israel's woes a pitying ear incline,
 And raise from earth Thy long-neglected vine!
 Her rifled fruits behold the heathen bear,
 And wild-wood boars her mangled clusters tear.
 Was it for this she stretch'd her peopled reign
 From far Euphrates to the western main?
 For this, o'er many a hill her boughs she threw,
 And her wide arms like goodly cedars grew?
 For this, proud Edom slept beneath her shade,
 And o'er th' Arabian deep her branches play'd?

O, feeble boast of transitory power!
 Vain, fruitless trust of Judah's happier hour!
 Not such their hope, when through the parted main
 The cloudy wonder led the warrior train:
 Not such their hope, when through the fields of night
 The torch of heaven diffus'd its friendly light:

Not, when fierce conquest urg'd the onward war,
 And hurl'd stern Canaan from his iron car:
 Nor, when five monarchs led to Gibeon's fight,
 In rude array, the harness'd Amorite:
 Yes -- in that hour, by mortal accents stay'd,
 The lingering Sun his fiery wheels delay'd;
 The Moon, obedient, trembled at the sound,
 Curb'd her pale car, and check'd her mazy round!

Let Sinai tell -- for she beheld his might,
 And God's own darkness veil'd her mystic height;
 (He, cherub-borne, upon the whirlwind rode,
 And the red mountain like a furnace glow'd):
 Let Sinai tell -- but who shall dare recite
 His praise, his power, eternal, infinite? --
 Awe-struck I cease; nor bid my strains aspire,
 Or serve his altar with unhallow'd fire.

Such were the cares that watch'd o'er Israel's fate,
 And such the glories of their infant state.
 --Triumphant race! and did your power decay?
 Fail'd the bright promise of your early day?
 No; -- by that sword, which, red with heathen gore,
 A giant spoil, the stripling champion bore;
 By him, the chief to farthest India known,
 The mighty master of the iv'ry throne;
 In heaven's own strength, high towering o'er her foes,
 Victorious Salem's lion banner rose:
 Before her footstool prostrate nations lay,
 And vassal tyrants crouch'd beneath her sway.
 --And he, the kingly sage, whose restless mind
 Through nature's mazes wander'd unconfin'd;
 Who ev'ry bird, and beast, and insect knew,
 And spake of every plant that quaffs the dew;
 To him were known -- so Hagar's offspring tell --
 The powerful sigil and the starry spell,
 The midnight call, hell's shadowy legions dread,
 And sounds that burst the slumbers of the dead.
 Hence all his might; for who could these oppose?
 And Tadmor thus, and Syrian Balbec rose.
 Yet e'en the works of toiling Genii fall,
 And vain was Estakhar's enchanted wall.
 In frantic converse with the mournful wind,
 There oft the houseless Santon rests reclin'd;
 Strange shapes he views, and drinks with wond'ring ears
 The voices of the dead, and songs of other years.

Such, the faint echo of departed praise,
 Still sound Arabia's legendary lays;
 And thus their fabling bards delight to tell
 How lovely were thy tents, O Israel!

For thee his iv'ry load Behemoth bore,
 And far Sofala teem'd with golden ore;
 Thine all the arts that wait on wealth's increase,
 Or bask and wanton in the beam of peace.
 When Tyber slept beneath the cypress gloom,
 And silence held the lonely woods of Rome;
 Or ere to Greece the builder's skill was known,
 Or the light chisel brush'd the Parian stone;
 Yet here fair Science nurs'd her infant fire,
 Fann'd by the artist aid of friendly Tyre.
 Then tower'd the palace, then in awful state
 The Temple rear'd its everlasting gate.
 No workman steel, no pond'rous axes rung;
 Like some tall palm the noiseless fabric sprung.
 Majestic silence! -- then the harp awoke,
 The cymbal clang'd, the deep-voic'd trumpet spoke;
 And Salem spread her suppliant arms abroad,
 View'd the descending flame, and bless'd the present God.

Nor shrunk she then, when, raging deep and loud,
 Beat o'er her soul the billows of the proud.
 E'en they who, dragg'd to Shinar's fiery sand,
 Till'd with reluctant strength the stranger's land;
 Who sadly told the slow-revolving years,
 And steep'd the captive's bitter bread with tears; --
 Yet oft their hearts with kindling hopes would burn,
 Their destin'd triumphs, and their glad return,
 And their sad lyres, which, silent and unstrung,
 In mournful ranks on Babel's willows hung,
 Would oft awake to chant their future fame,
 And from the skies their ling'ring Saviour claim.
 His promis'd aid could every fear controul;
 This nerv'd the warrior's arm, this steel'd the martyr's
 soul!

Nor vain their hope: -- Bright beaming through the sky,
 Burst in full blaze the Day-spring from on high;
 Earth's utmost isles exulted at the sight,
 And crowding nations drank the orient light.
 Lo, star-led chiefs Assyrian odours bring,
 And bending Magi seek their infant King!
 Mark'd ye, where, hov'ring o'er his radiant head,
 The dove's white wings celestial glory shed?
 Daughter of Sion! virgin queen! rejoice!
 Clap the glad hand, and lift th' exulting voice!
 He comes, -- but not in regal splendour drest,
 The haughty diadem, the Tyrian vest;
 Not arm'd in flame, all-glorious from afar,
 Of hosts the chieftain, and the lord of war:
 Messiah comes: -- let furious discord cease;
 Be peace on earth before the Prince of Peace!
 Disease and anguish feel his blest controul,
 And howling fiends release the tortur'd soul;

The beams of gladness hell's dark caves illume,
And Mercy broods above the distant gloom.

Thou palsied earth, with noonday night o'erspread!
Thou sick'ning sun, so dark so deep, so red!
Ye hov'ring ghosts, that throng the starless air,
Why shakes the earth? why fades the light? declare!
Are those his limbs, with ruthless scourges torn?
His brows, all bleeding with the twisted thorn?
His the pale form, the meek forgiving eye
Rais'd from the cross in patient agony?
-- Be dark, thou sun, -- thou noonday night arise,
And hide, oh hide, the dreadful sacrifice!

Ye faithful few, by bold affection led,
Who round the Saviour's cross your sorrows shed,
Not for his sake your tearful vigils keep; --
Weep for your country, for your children weep!
--Vengeance! thy fiery wing their race pursu'd;
Thy thirsty poniard blush'd with infant blood.
Rous'd at thy call, and panting still for game,
The bird of war, the Latian eagle came.
Then Judah rag'd, by ruffian Discord led,
Drunk with the steamy carnage of the dead:
He saw his sons by dubious slaughter fall,
And war without, and death within the wall.
Wide-wasting Plague, gaunt Famine, mad Despair,
And dire Debate, and clamorous Strife was there:
Love, strong as Death, retain'd his might no more,
And the pale parent drank her children's gore.
Yet they, who wont to roam th' ensanguin'd plain,
And spurn with fell delight their kindred slain;
E'en they, when, high above the dusty fight,
Their burning Temple rose in lurid light,
To their lov'd altars paid a parting groan,
And in their country's woes forgot their own.

As 'mid the cedar courts, and gates of gold,
The trampled ranks in miry carnage roll'd,
To save their Temple every hand essay'd,
And with cold fingers grasp'd the feeble blade:
Through their torn veins reviving fury ran,
And life's last anger warm'd the dying man!

But heavier far the fetter'd captive's doom!
To glut with sighs the iron ear of Rome:
To swell, slow-pacing by the car's tall side,
The stoic tyrant's philosophic pride;
To flesh the lion's rav'nous jaws, or feel
The sportive fury of the fencer's steel;
Or pant, deep plung'd beneath the sultry mine,
For the light gales of balmy Palestine.

Ah! fruitful now no more, -- an empty coast,
 She mourn'd her sons enslav'd, her glories lost:
 In her wide streets the lonely raven bred,
 There bark'd the wolf, and dire hyaenas fed.
 Yet midst her towery fanes, in ruin laid,
 The pilgrim saint his murmuring vespers paid;
 'Twas his to climb the tufted rocks, and rove
 The chequer'd twilight of the olive grove;
 'Twas his to bend beneath the sacred gloom,
 And wear with many a kiss Messiah's tomb:
 While forms celestial fill'd his tranced eye,
 The day-light dreams of pensive piety,
 O'er his still breast a tearful fervour stole,
 And softer sorrows charm'd the mourner's soul.

Oh, lives there one, who mocks his artless zeal?
 Too proud to worship, and too wise to feel?
 Be his the soul with wintry Reason blest,
 The dull, lethargic sov'reign of the breast!
 Be his the life that creeps in dead repose,
 No joy that sparkles, and no tear that flows!

Far other they who rear'd yon pompous shrine,
 And bade the rock with Parian marble shine.
 Then hallow'd Peace renew'd her wealthy reign,
 Then altars smok'd, and Sion smil'd again.
 There sculptur'd gold and costly gems were seen,
 And all the bounties of the British queen;
 There barb'rous kings their sandal'd nations led,
 And steel-clad champions bow'd the crested head.
 There, when her fiery race the desert pour'd,
 And pale Byzantium fear'd Medina's sword,
 When coward Asia shook in trembling woe,
 And bent apall'd before the Bactrian bow;
 From the moist regions of the western star
 The wand'ring hermit wak'd the storm of war.
 Their limbs all iron, and their souls all flame,
 A countless host, the red-cross warriors came:
 E'en hoary priests the sacred combat wage,
 And clothe in steel the palsied arm of age;
 While beardless youths and tender maids assume
 The weighty motion and the glancing plume.
 In sportive pride the warrior damsels wield
 The pond'rous falchion, and the sun-like shield,
 And start to see their armour's iron gleam
 Dance with blue lustre in Tabaria's stream.

The blood-red banner floating o'er their van,
 All madly blithe the mingl'd myriads ran:
 Impatient Death beheld his destin'd food,
 And hov'ring vultures snuff'd the scent of blood.

Not such the numbers, nor the host so dread,
 By northern Brenn or Scythian Timur led,
 Nor such the heart-inspiring zeal that bore
 United Greece to Phrygia's reedy shore!
 There Gaul's proud knights with boastful mien advance,
 Form the long line, and shake the cornel lance;
 Here, link'd with Thrace, in close battalions stand
 Ausonia's sons, a soft inglorious band;
 There the stern Norman joins the Austrian train,
 And the dark tribes of late-reviving Spain;
 Here in black files, advancing firm and slow,
 Victorious Albion twangs the deadly bow: --
 Albion, -- still prompt the captive's wrong to aid,
 And wield in freedom's cause the freeman's generous blade!

Ye sainted spirits of the warrior dead,
 Whose giant force Britannia's armies led!
 Whose bickering falchions, foremost in the fight,
 Still pour'd confusion on the Soldan's might;
 Lords of the biting axe and beamy spear,
 Wide-conquering Edward, lion Richard, hear!
 At Albion's call your crested pride resume,
 And burst the marble slumbers of the tomb!
 Your sons behold, in arm, in heart the same,
 Still press the footsteps of parental fame,
 To Salem still their generous aid supply,
 And pluck the palm of Syrian chivalry!

When he, from towery Malta's yielding isle,
 And the green waters of reluctant Nile,
 Th' Apostate chief, -- from Misraim's subject shore
 To Acre's walls his trophied banners bore;
 When the pale desert mark'd his proud array,
 And Desolation hop'd an ampler sway;
 What hero then triumphant Gaul dismay'd?
 What arm repell'd the victo Renegade?
 Britannia's champion! -- bath'd in hostile blood,
 High on the breach the dauntless SEAMAN stood:
 Admiring Asia saw th' unequal fight, --
 E'en the pale crescent blessed the Christian's might.
 Oh day of death! Oh thirst, beyond controul,
 Of crimson conquest in th' Invader's soul!
 The slain, yet warm, by social footsteps trod,
 O'er the red moat supplied a panting road;
 O'er the red moat our conquering thunders flew,
 And loftier still the grisly rampire grew.
 While proudly glow'd above the rescued tower
 The wavy cross that mark'd Britannia's power.

Yet still destruction sweeps the lonely plain,
 And heroes lift the generous sword in vain.
 Still o'er her sky the clouds of anger roll,
 And God's revenge hangs heavy on her soul.
 Yet shall she rise; -- but not by war restor'd,
 Not built in murder, -- planted by the sword.
 Yes, Salem, thou shalt rise: thy father's aid
 Shall heal the wound his chastening hand has made;
 Shall judge the proud oppressor's ruthless sway,
 And burst his brazen bonds, and cast his cords away,
 Then on your tops shall deathless verdure spring,
 Break forth, ye mountains, and ye valleys, sing!
 No more your thirsty rocks shall frown forlorn,
 The unbeliever's jest, the heathen's scorn;
 The sultry sands shall tenfold harvests yield,
 And a new Eden deck the thorny field.
 E'en now, perchance, wide-waving o'er the land,
 That mighty Angel lifts his golden wand,
 Courts the bright vision of descending power,
 Tells every gate, and measures every tower;
 And chides the tardy seals that yet detain
 Thy Lion, Judah, from his destin'd reign.

And who is He? the vast, the awful form,
 Girt with the whirl-wind, sandal'd with the storm?
 A western cloud around his limbs is spread,
 His crown a rainbow, and a sun his head.
 To highest heaven he lifts his kingly hand,
 And treads at once the ocean and the land;
 And, hark! his voice amid the thunder's roar,
 His dreadful voice, that time shall be no more!

Lo! cherub hands the golden courts prepare,
 Lo! thrones arise, and every saint is there;
 Earth's utmost bounds confess their awful sway,
 The mountains worship, and the isles obey;
 Nor sun nor moon they need, -- nor day, nor night; --
 God is their temple, and the Lamb their light:
 And shall not Israel's sons exulting come,
 Hail the glad beam, and claim their ancient home?
 On David's throne shall David's offspring reign,
 And the dry bones be warm with life again.
 Hark! white-rob'd crowds their deep hosannas raise,
 And the hoarse flood repeats the sound of praise;
 Ten thousand harps attune the mystic song,
 Ten thousand thousand saints the strain prolong; --
 "Worthy the Lamb! omnipotent to save,
 "Who died, who lives, triumphant o'er the grave!"

I bless my Charlotte's Natal Day!

by

Reginald Heber.

December's Day is short and drear,
And bleak and bare December's tree,
But more than all the circling year
December boasts a charm for me.
When this, thy natal morn, draws near,
And fancy wings her way to thee!

Dear Snowdrop of the shorten'd day,
Fann'd by the wild and wintry wind!
The Roses nurs'd by Summer's ray
Less sweet, less pure than thee I find;
Nor all the boast of breathing May
Can match the blossoms of thy mind!

December's snow is on thine arm,
It decks and guards thy virgin breast;
But whence arose the glowing charm
Wherewith thy sunny smile is drest?
Who gave thy blush its tincture warm,
Or thy sweet song its thrilling zest?

How slowly, clogg'd with doubt and fear,
The months of absence melt away!
Oh, when shall I those accents hear?
Oh, when that blush, that smile survey?
Yet still - to faithful memory dear -
I bless my Charlotte's natal day!

On Death of the Reverend Thomas C. Heber.

My dear Friend, -

You will I am sure sympathize with my present affliction when I tell you what you may perhaps have heard before but which I have not till now had any heart to write about, that I have lost my kind, my generous and warmhearted brother Thomas. He died Wednesday the 27th and was buried yesterday. A few days before his death he had been attacked by a severe affection of the spine which was attributed to some hurts which he had received in hunting. From this he was to all appearances rapidly recovering and was on the Monday regarded as out of danger but was found dead on the following morning in the attitude of sleep when his servant came to ask him if he were ready for breakfast. The head having been opened the causes of his illness and death appear to have been the presence first of an enlarged blood vessel on the brain which occasioned the slight paralysis by which he was at first affected, and afterwards the rupture of the same blood vessel which must have been instantaneously fatal. He dies bitterly regretted by the poor both of Hodnet and Moreton, to whom he was with a small income and the greatest abhorrence of ostentation a kind and liberal friend. Liberal not of money only but of time and trouble to an extent which we none of us in his lifetime knew. With me, he was so much associated in all my future schemes of ambition or utility. I had been so much in the habit of pleasing myself by hopes of what I might in future do for his advantage, and my daily walks, my daily conversations and my daily prayers were all so blended with this idea, and, all this time, my former extravagance had left as yet so little service in my power to render him, that I cannot help feeling that there was only one person on earth whom I could so ill have borne to lose, and recollecting with a very awful apprehension on how very slight a tenure I hold that most beloved object. I have another cause of sorrow and self reproach in the manner in which I suffered his death to surprise me, and that I had been so fearful of wearying his shattered nerves and so devoid of any apprehension of his sudden departure, that I suffered him to slip away without having with that earnestness which I ought to have felt improved the few days of his illness as became his elder brother and one to whose religious opinions he looked up with remarkable deference. I have hope, thank God, and hope on good grounds that he had prepared himself to die, and the

expressions of his gratitude when he regarded himself as out of danger, are even now as music in my ears, but if his preparation was defective, how can I ever make him amends for my blindness to his danger, and the slight mention I made of those hopes and feelings which it was my duty to have fanned into a flame? Oh that I might ever pray for him! The ancient Christian Church from (torn) down to Augustine believed that the state of our souls (torn) not so irrevocably fixed upon the day of Judgement but that the prayers of the Faithful on Earth might reach and help them, nor is there a more beautiful passage in all Augustine's work than that in which he begs that Christ's mercy may abound where there may have been anything defective in the repentance of his departed Mother. What do you think of this opinion? It is one for which in Scripture we have no express authority, but the analogy of the case and our natural feelings themselves might seem to warrant such address to God, and the antiquity of the custom is also some presumption in its favour. We pray for the spirits of those who are now departing, why not for those who are already in expectation of their Judge; Luther allows the custom and Johnson practised it. After all my anxiety is perhaps no more than weakness of faith, but where such interests are at stake who can be otherwise than anxious? Oh that I had been equally alive to such fears before!

God help you my dear Friend.

R. Heber.

(PS) I ought to tell you that my Mother and Sister bear their loss with a courage that puts me to shame. But they have no self reproach!

Southey's Letter to James White.

May 2, 1814.

To: Mr. James White,

The Church stands in need of men of various characters and acquirements.....There are hardly more than half-a-dozen pulpits in the kingdom in which an eloquent preacher would not be out of his place. Everywhere else, what is required of the preacher is to be plain, perspicuous, and in earnest. If he feels himself, he will make his congregation feel. But it is not in the pulpit that the minister may do most good. He will do infinitely more by living with his parishioners like a pastor; by becoming their confidential adviser, their friend, their comforter, directing the education of the poor, and, as far as he can, inspecting that of all, which it is not difficult for a man of good sense and gentle disposition to do as an official duty, without giving it, in the slightest degree the appearance of officious interference.....The pulpit is a clergyman's parade, the parish is his field of active service.

Robert Southey.

Unpublished Bow Meeting Song

by Mr.Reginald Heber.

Sung by Mrs Williams at her Bow-meeting. August.7th.1822.

Let Swarthy Dee roll on t-sea.
With tides majestic swelling: -
More sweet the woody glens to me
And flowery braes of Allyn.

Let Hafer sing his Persian Spring
Mid tufted roses swelling; -
His whole pasture no flower can bear
Like those beside the Allyn.

Though stately Thames our homage claims
Who loves a monarch's dwelling
We'll match his thousand courtly Dames,
With one - beside the Allyn - !

Though North and South and East and West
Are many a form excelling.
The fairest, mildest, kindest, best
We find beside the Allyn! -

When Summer buds begin to blow
When Autumn leaves are falling,
Be ours to bend the sounding bow
Along the banks of Allyn.

And when of Age the wintry blast
All pleasure comes appalling -
The lingering thought shall be our last
On friends beside the Allyn.

INCIDENCE of HEBER HYMNS
in MODERN USAGE in GREAT BRITAIN

Heber Hymns

| | Hymns of Prayer and Praise 1 | Hymns Ancient and Modern 2 | The Baptist Church Hymnal 3 | The Church Hymnary 4 | Congregational Hymnary 5 | Songs of Praise 6 | The English Hymnal 7 | The New Methodist Hymn Book 8 | The Church and School Hymnal 9 | The Clarendon Hymn Book 10 | School Worship 11 |
|---|------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| Brightest and best of the sons of the morning! | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| The Son of God goes forth to war, | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| Bread of the world in mercy broken | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| From Greenland's icy mountains | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x | x | | |
| God that madest Earth and Heaven | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | x | |
| Hosanna to the living Lord, | x | x | x | x | | | | | | | |
| Lord of mercy and of might! | x | | x | x | x | | | | | | |
| I prais'd the Earth, in beauty seen | x | x | | | | x | | | | | |
| By cool Siloam's shady rill | x | | | x | | | | | | | |
| Oh Lord, turn not thy Face away | x | | | | | | x | | | | |
| Oh most merciful! Oh most bountiful! | | x | | | | x | | | | | |
| When Spring unlocks the flowers | | | | | | x | | | | | x |
| God is gone up with a merry noise | x | | | | | | | | | | |
| Oh King of earth, and air and sea! | x | | | | | | | | | | |
| Oh Saviour, is thy promise fled? | x | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sons of men behold from far, 12 | x | | | | | | | | | | |
| Spirit of Truth! on this Thy day | x | | | | | | | | | | |
| Virgin-born! we bow before Thee | | x | | | | | | | | | |
| We praise thee, Lord, for all the martyred throng, 13 | | x | | | | | | | | | |

Footnotes referring to hymnals overleaf

- 1 Hymns of Prayer and Praise London: Milford, Oxford University Press, 1921.
- 2 Hymns Ancient and Modern London: Clowes and Sons, 1950.
- 3 The Baptist Church Hymnal (Rev.Ed.) London: Psalms and Hymns Trust, 1933.
- 4 The Church Hymnary Edinburgh: Frowde, 1928.
- 5 Congregational Hymnary London: Congregational Union of England and Wales, Inc., 1916.
- 6 Songs of Praise London: Oxford University Press, 1931.
- 7 The English Hymnal London: Frowde, Oxford University Press, 1906.
- 8 The New Methodist Hymn Book London: Epworth Press, 1935.
- 9 The Church and School Hymnal London: S.P.C.K. - C.of E.S.S. Institute, 1926.
- 10 The Clarendon Hymn Book London: Milford, Oxford University Press, 1936.
- 11 School Worship London: Congregational Union of England and Wales, 1926.
- 12 Anon. in Heber's Hymns; credited to C.Wesley and Heber in 4.
- 13 Not in Heber's Hymns.

INCIDENCE of HEBER HYMNS
in MODERN USAGE in the U.S.A.

Heber Hymns

| | Hymnal of Prot.Epis.Church - 1 | The New Church Hymnal - 2 | The Hymnal - Presbyterian - 3 | Christian Worship and Praise - 4 | Hymns for the Living Age - 5 | Christian Worship - 6 | Christian Hymns - 7 | The Hymnal, Army and Navy - 8 | The Methodist Hymnal - 9 | Hymns of the Christian Life - 10 | The Pilgrim Hymnal - 11 | Beacon Song and Service Book - 12 | Services of Religion - 13 | The Broadman Hymnal - 14 |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| God that madest Earth and Heaven | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | |
| The Son of God goes forth to war, | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | x |
| Bread of the world, in mercy broken | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | |
| Brightest and best of the sons of the morning! | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | |
| From Greenland's icy mountains | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | | | | x |
| By cool Siloam's shady rill | x | x | x | | x | | | | | x | x | | x | |
| Hosanna to the living Lord, | x | x | x | x | | | | | | x | | | | |
| When Spring unlocks the flowers | | x | | | | x | | | | | | x | | |
| I prais'd the Earth, in beauty seen | x | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Footnotes referring to hymnals
overleaf.

1. The Hymnal of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. Norwood, Mass.: The Plympton Press, 1940-1943.
2. The New Church Hymnal H. Augustine Smith, New York: Appleton-Century Co., 1937.
3. The Hymnal Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Christian Education, 1936.
4. Christian Worship and Praise Ed. Henry Hallam Tweedy, New York: A.S. Barnes & Co., 1939.
5. Hymns for the Living Age Ed. H. Augustine Smith, New York: The Century Co., 1924.
6. Christian Worship - A Hymnal St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1944.
7. Christian Hymns C. Wayne Berry New York: The North River Press, 1945.
8. The Hymnal Army and Navy Ed. Ivan L. Bennett Washington: U.S. Gov't Printing Office, 1942; A.S. Barnes and Co., 1941.
9. The Methodist Hymnal Nashville, Tenn.: The Methodist Book Concern, 1939.
10. Hymns of the Christian Life Ed. Milton S. Littlefield New York: A.S. Barnes and Co., 1940.
11. The Pilgrim Hymnal Boston, Chicago: The Pilgrim Press, (Revised Ed.) 1935.
12. Beacon Song and Service Book Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1935.
13. Services of Religion for use in the Churches of the Free Spirit Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, 1944.
14. The Broadman Hymnal Nashville, Tenn.: The Broadman Press, 1940.

A Partial List of Biblical Texts
Used by the Rev. Reginald Heber for his Sermons.

| <u>Old Testament</u> | | <u>New Testament</u> | |
|----------------------|---------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Genesis | xxviii, 16-17 | Matthew | i, 21 |
| | | | v, 1-4 |
| | | | v, 4 |
| Exodus | iii, 14 | | v, 6 |
| | ix, 16 | | v, 10 |
| | xx, 2 | | v, 25 |
| | xx, 8 | | vi, 10 |
| | xx, 12 | | vi, 17-18 |
| | xx, 13 | | vii, 6 |
| | xx, 15 | | vii, 11-12 |
| | xx, 17 | | vii, 15-16 |
| | | | viii, 8-9 |
| Numbers | xxiii, 10 | | viii, 12 |
| | | | viii, 24 |
| Deuteronomy, | xxxii, 29 | | ix, 2 |
| | | | ix, 9 |
| Joshua | xxiv, 15 | | ix, 38 |
| | | | xi, 14 |
| I Samuel | xii, 17 | | xii, 36 |
| | | | xii, 45 |
| II Samuel | xii, 13 | | xii, 50 |
| | | | xiii, 30 |
| I Kings | xiii, 6 | | xv, 28 |
| | xviii, 17-18 | | xvi, 26 |
| | xxi, 25 | | xx, 10-19 |
| | | | xx, 16 |
| II Kings | v, 26 | | xxi, 13 |
| | vi, 16 | | xxii, 2-3 |
| | x, 10 | | xxii, 4 |
| | | | xxii, 5 |
| Psalms | xiv, 1 | | xxii, 21 |
| | xxxii, 2 | | xxii, 37-40 |
| | cxix, 9 | | xxiii, 37 |
| | | | xxv, 29 |
| Proverbs | iv, 23 | | xxviii, 19 |
| | | | xxviii, 35 |
| Ecclesiastes | v, 1 | | |
| Isaiah | iv, 13 | Mark | vii, 37 |
| | xxxviii, 1 | | viii, 9 |
| | | | xiv, 22-24 |
| | | Luke | ii, 14 |
| | | | ii, 21 |
| | | | ii, 52 |
| | | | vii, 22 |
| | | | viii, 15 |
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| | | | xiii, 9 |
| | | | xiv, 16 |
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| | | | xvii, 17 |
| | | | xviii, 14 |
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| | | | xix, 46 |
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| | | | xxiv, 37 |
| | | John | i, 12 |
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| | | | iii, 2 |
| | | | iv, 49 |
| | | | v, 6-8 |
| | | | vi, 12 |
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| | | | xiii, 34 |
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| | | | xiv, 17 |
| | | | xv, 5 |
| | | | xvi, 22 |
| | | | xx, 19 |
| | | | xxi, 22 |

(Continued)

Old Testament

Isaiah li, 12-13
 lvii, 1
 lix, 20

Jeremiah v, 23-24
 xxiii, 6
 xxxv, 18-19
 xlvii, 6-7

Ezekiel xiv, 3

Daniel xii, 3

Micah vi, 8

Zephaniah iii, 6-7

New Testament

Acts ii, 38-39
 ix, 5
 xix, 2-3
 xx, 34-35
 xxvii, 23-24

Romans vi, 3-4
 vi, 23
 vii, 24-25
 viii, 14
 viii, 21-22
 xii, 19-21
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 xv, 7

I Corinthians
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 xiii, 12
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 xv, 56-57

II Corinthians
 iv, 18

Galatians
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Ephesians
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Philipians
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 ii, 5
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Colossians
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I Timothy
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II Timothy
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 iv, 10

Hebrews i, 1-2

Hebrews
 xii, 1-2
 xiii, 4

James i, 10
 i, 21
 i, 26
 iii, 2
 v, 12

I Peter
 ii, 11
 ii, 12
 iii, 13-14
 iv, 8
 v, 8-9

I John v, 4
 v, 21

Revelation
 i, 17-18
 xii, 7
 xiv, 6

Heber on Calcutta Archdeaconry.

Hodnet, March 23 1823.

I feel much obliged by the information you have obtained for me, (and which may be very valuable to me) respecting the characters and qualifications of the several Chaplains whom I am to find in Calcutta. Of Corrie, Parsons, and Thomason I had already had reason to form a very favourable opinion and it had been a serious disappointment to me to learn that the 2 former were likely to return to Europe. I have been hotly canvassed for the Archdeaconry in favour of 2 of the Chaplains now on furlough in England, but who are I think, neither of them eligible, inasmuch as neither of them comes within the terms of the Patent as being actually, at the time of the vacancy occurring resident in India. I have, however, returned the same answer to all solicitations, that, namely, I would make no promise till I had the means of forming my opinion on the spot.

My feelings, incline, however, in favour of a person who is considered the junior of all these gentlemen on the list of Chaplains, but who is described to me as exemplary, zealous, and most useful, as fully acquainted with all the plans of the late Bishop and as having acquired so tolerable knowledge of Hindoostanee as to officiate gratuitously in that language, at the new Church in Fort Williams. His name is Hawtayne and he was Bishop Middleton's Junior Chaplain. He seems by all that I have heard the man of all others for the situation, except that (I suspect from some of his letters) he is ultra high-church. This, however, may be a hasty impression, and those who know him recommend him as an extremely warmhearted and affectionate man remarkably sensible to attention and kindness, and likely to join in any benevolent schemes which may come recommended by his ecclesiastical superiors. If this is the case his High Churchmanship will be all in his favour as making his cooperation less suspected. Can you learn anything about his character, temper, and the estimation in which he is held?

Bishop Heber's Letter to John Thornton.

My Dear Thornton.-

In my note by Mr. Parson I promised you a letter. Indeed, both before and since I have often reproached myself for not having written, though, had you yourself witnessed the worry of engagements, business and visits which I was obliged to go through for many weeks after my arrival in India, you would neither wonder at nor, I think, blame my silence. I do not think, indeed, that the direct duties of this Diocese.- (bating the visitations) are more than a man may do with a moderate share of diligence.- or by any means so great as in some of the more populous Dioceses in England.- They are such, however, as I must do all for myself.- since.- though I keep a native scribe at work from nine till four daily.- he can only be trusted to copy what I write.- while it is necessary for me to obtain and keep copies of all the official correspondence in which I am a party:- besides which an intercourse with Chaplains, Missionaries and Religious Societies is, in India, all carried on by letter, and what, in England, would be settled in a few minutes by a personal communication is here the subject of long arguments, explanations and rejoinders in writing.- I at first, therefore had occasion to work pretty hard and am now so fortunate as to be completely rid of all arrears of business.- and to find myself equal to the daily calls of my correspondents without so completely sacrificing all other studies as I was, for some time, compelled to do.- Still I am without books.- being as yet in a borrowed house and having no place to unpack my boxes.- and, what has been lately still more inconvenient, without sermons, so that I have been obliged, since the exhaustion of my scanty sea store, to compose often two and sometimes three a week, amid greater distractions and with fewer opportunities of study or reference than ever before had to complain of.- I continue well however, (thank God!) and have abundant reason at present to be hopeful and contented in my situation, where I meet with much attention and kindness.- and where the apparent field of usefulness is so great that, while I deeply feel my own insufficiency, I am more and more impressed with the undeserved Goodness of God in calling me to such a situation.- You will have heard 'ere now of the error into which I fell on first coming out, with respect to the appointment of Archdeacon.- and Parson who was perfectly acquainted with my motives and feelings at the time, - will, I have no doubt explained them to you.- The fact was there was no choice except between Corrie and Hawtayne.- who were, in all matters of business the fittest men - and who were pretty nearly equally popular with two different parties

in Calcutta. The former had the advantage in seniority, in manners, in amiable temper and less acquaintance with the country and more particularly the Religious part of it. - the other is, I think, the cleverer fellow - and more in the habit of the peculiar business of Spiritual Courts and the other technicalities of an Archdeacon and a Bishop's Chaplain. - I was still more (I confess) biased towards Hawtayne because I soon found that I should find it necessary to depart in some pretty essential points, from the system of policy pursued by my predecessor and I was anxious, therefore, by preferring his chaplain and carrying into effect, therefore, his known intentions in his favour - to clear myself from any suspicion of personal disrespect towards his memory. - What, however, weighed with me more than all the rest was the belief in which all with whom I conversed in Calcutta encouraged me. - that Corrie would rather lose than gain by becoming Archdeacon - an opinion which was confirmed by his silence on the subject during five days that we were in constant communication - while Hawtayne and indeed (between ourselves) our friend Parson. - gave during that interval many broad hints of their wishes for the situation. - You will ask me perhaps why I did not think of your friend Thomason but the truth is that, - by naming him I should have offended all his seniors far more than by naming Hawtayne concerning whom the late Bishop's views were known, and who a large party in Calcutta, particularly the half-castes who are much attached to him, had long since designated as the future Archdeacon. - Under these circumstances I gave H reason to believe he should have the appointment - but I had no sooner done so than I received a most interesting and pathetic letter from Corrie, stating in the most modest and gentlemanly manner his long services. - his infirm health which made the duties of Senior Chaplain irksome to him, and his embarrassing circumstances (of which I had no suspicion) which prevented his returning to England without some better provision than the half pay of a Chaplain - This appeal was irresistible and I applied to H to release me from my promise. - which he did very handsomely (indeed it was hardly more than conditional) so that, to my great and daily increasing satisfaction Corrie is now Archdeacon. With his late colleague, Parson, you will probably have, before this reaches you become acquainted. He was not very popular in Calcutta either with the clergy or laity. - being regarded by the former as overbearing and intriguing. - by the latter as too secular and attentive to the profits of his station. - My own experience of him was however very favourable. I found him warmhearted and friendly to a great degree, frank and fearless in expressing his opinion. - indeed with an evident fondness for opposition and paradox about his character. - but at the same time a ready and able agent in many of my measures and agreeing in all the leading measures for the success of which I was anxious. He is not a popular preacher and has

always had too many different irons in the fire to be much of a success. But he is a man of very powerful and ready talent in business and conversation. - and his absence will be much felt in the different charitable institutions whose affairs he very ably managed. The point in which he oftenest annoyed me was his bitterness against Hawtayne who, on his side, - did not fall short in rancour. Hawtayne himself is really a good, conscientious and useful man. - perhaps the most diligent parish priest in Calcutta - and (Mr. Thomason not excepted) the most popular among the county born, and the poor. No person in India, (not a professed missionary) bestows so much pains on the native schools; and he claims (as well as Corrie and Fisher of Meerut) the rare honour of having made a Native of Respectable Caste a convert to Christianity. - But his views of Church Union and government are too much of the Norris school. His temper is very unhappy. - and he shows very little disposition either to conciliate or to forgive. - Probably if his circumstances were better (for he is poor and has a family of sisters at home whom he has great difficulty in maintaining out of his Chaplain's pay) these asperities would be softened. But at present he is always suspecting affronts or anticipating evils. - and, though I esteem and honour most circumstances in his character and conduct. - I am tempted to be less sorry than I otherwise should be. - that he now very seldom comes near me. Your friend Thomason is a very good and very learned man. - in most points (except goodness) a remarkable contrast to both these whom I have named being, in fact, a child in gentleness and facility of disposition the most unsuspecting being possible. - inclined to think well of every body and always speaking so well of others as sometimes to have brought him. - very unintentionally I believe on his part) into the suspicion of flattery - He is an excellent preacher. - but has now made his flock at the Old Church very angry by accepting the vacant situation at the Cathedral. - On this subject which has excited a great ferment both among the chaplains and the more religious part of the Laity I have a good deal to say which I shall make the subject of a separate letter to Mr. Parry. - At present I will only say that, though I at first was (in common with Corrie, Parson and Hawtayne (the only point on which I have known these two agree) opposed to Mr. Thomason's being removed, as inspection of the terms of his appointment, and a further consideration of the circumstances of the Indian Church. - induced me to withdraw my opposition. - Mr. T is in fact a most useful and (between ourselves) a necessary accession to the Cathedral. - Now that the thing is done. - I do not see any symptoms of the dissension (which Corrie and Parson apprehended) of Mr. Thomason's late flock though many of them doubtless follow him to the Cathedral and with dire countenance and occasional assistance. - I have extremely good hopes that Mr. Crawford will, both in health, talents, and character (in

this last he is excelled by no man) be found equal to his situation. - All for which I am now anxious is that the assistant who is to be sent from home, may not be an elderly man (lest Crawford's youth should be despised) and still more, that he may be a man of moderate and conciliatory religious principles and character. The congregation of the Old Church which was first formed by Mr. Brown. - is still spoken of by many persons in Calcutta. - as made up of "the Evangelical party". A few years ago there was, I understand, an avowed and impenetrable boundary between them and the frequenters of the Cathedral. - insomuch that the preacher of the Old Church for the time being. - was hardly acknowledged as a member of the same communion by his brother Chaplains and those who attended his ministry would as soon have gone to Mass as to St. John's. - The amiable temper and moderation of Thomason. - the excellent terms on which he latterly was with Bp Middleton and the similarity of opinions with those of both the late Senior Chaplain have, for some time back, brought the two parties nearer to each other. - and though, probably a large proportion of the older communicants at the Mission Church are Calvinists. - and though possibly Parson and Mill (of whom I shall have occasion to speak shortly) are right in saying that many of them sit pretty loose in their attachment to the Church and would be by a very slight offense driven over to the Dissenter. - yet I have reason to believe that both these peculiarities are no longer so strong as they used to be. - I am certainly no Calvinist, nor have I ever disguised my opinions. - yet I am told that my preaching is acceptable to them: and if Thomason differs from me at all. - the difference is so little perceivable that it seems pretty evident that they are not now disposed to contend about the curiosities and less essential points of Christianity. - and I should grieve, I confess, to see the feud revived by the introduction of such a man as Dealtry's curate whom you wot of. - of Mill you apprehend hear no good from Parson, who is on various counts strongly prejudiced against him. - Yet I believe him to be pious. - I am sure he is a very learned man. - and all which I have seen of him gives me the impression of an humble retired, modified temper. - with a strong desire to forward the course of religion. - He had a quarrel, however with the two senior chaplains after Bishop M's death. - and since then, he has been inoculated with some of Hawtayne's intolerant notions. - which to say the least of them. - are not well suited to the state of the Church in India. I found him and Hawtayne in hot newspaper controversy with the committee of the Church Missionary Society, in the course of which both parties (as often happens) had been to blame but Mill and Hawtayne the most so. - So far as Mill is concerned I have succeeded in making up the breach. He is admirably qualified to do our cause good service, and in fact, has already done so in a letter to Mr. A. Hamilton, giving an account of our Missionaries in Mysore.

To the affairs of the Church Missionary Society I have paid considerable attention and have great reason to be satisfied with the manner in which they are conducted, as well as personally with the Committee and all the missionaries whom I have seen. - I have, as you are perhaps aware. - obtained the adoption of some changes in the Constitution of the Society, qualified, I hope, to put it on a more stable and popular footing and to obtain for us both at home and in India a greater notoriety and usefulness. - I will honestly say that, in bringing about these arrangements, I found in the first instance and now particularly, among the Old Church Congregation. - a considerable jealousy of Episcopal interference, and a manifest reluctance to acknowledge even the power of licensing Missionaries. - respecting which. - if you recollect what passed with Mr. Pratt. - there was at home, not the smallest difficulty. The Clergy and Missionaries, however, were strongly with me. - and secondly, that it is a safeguard to the Missionaries themselves since when they are thus legally authorized to their positions neither I myself nor any future Bishop can silence them without a cause assigned and a regular proceeding in the Consistory. - It has, indeed been my endeavor and I hope I have not failed in it. - to establish as broad a distinction as possible between the temporal powers and patronage of an English Bishop and the Spiritual Superintendence which only belongs to Bishops in General, and which perfectly consists and, indeed is altogether unconnected with the civil Rights of Governments, Societies, and Individuals. These two different characters Bishop Middleton, good and wise man as he was. - appears to have always confounded. He was always in hot water about the location of Chaplains and the management of the Vestry. He would not consecrate a Church unless the Company made over the Land to him by a formal deed of gift, and was afraid of ordaining a clergyman unless he could offer the same sort of title which would have been satisfactory in Lincolnshire. - Yet with all these mistakes of judgment. - I see abundant reason to hold him in veneration for his talents - his honesty. - his activity. - his devotion and his splendid bounty and shall have reason to account myself happy indeed. - if. - while avoiding his foibles. - I can at all draw near him in his sterling worth and excellence.

(- I have not yet drawn on you for the £1000 which the Ch.M.I. has bestowed on our new College. - We want the money badly enough, - but. - as I wish it to be appropriated to some one conspicuous object, - which may bear the name of the Society and coincide with my other measures for establishing its connection with and equitable claim on the New Foundation. - I have kept it back till the flagging, hewing, stalling and wainscotting of the Chapel come to be set about. - This is more immediately necessary than the Printing House and Types. - it is what we should have some difficulty in accomplishing without your aid, and as a hope was held out that your Bounty

would be annual. - we may hope to inscribe another year. - your name on the Printing House Door. - I am happy to say that Corrie and all the other Members of the Committee here are perfectly satisfied with my interpretation of the Statutes of the Church of England to the Benefits of the Institution.

Pray tell Mr. Parry. - with my best Compliments and Regards that all which I have seen of India justifies his praise of it. - It is a fine and most interesting country. The European Society is agreeable, hospitable, and well-informed, and there are many excellent people in Calcutta. and the climate though when we first landed it was said to be unreasonably and unusually hot. - has been for the last two months really delightful, and like the first part of an English August. - But, alas, new friends cannot be like old, new lands cannot be like home! And while I should be the most thankless of men not to be contented and happy here. - I cannot help often wishing for a sight of the hill above Hodnet or the new fence which I left you and Mrs. Thornton contriving at Clapham.

No orders have yet come out from the Court of Directors respecting a house for me. - They hardly indeed were to be expected. before the Act to that effect had passed into a Law, but the delay has been unfortunate for me since no good house is to be had in Calcutta or the neighbourhood, excepting by a lease or by purchase; and still knowing the kind intentions of the Court towards me. - it was obviously my business to form no permanent engagement of this kind till their pleasure was made known. Lord Amnerst most kindly allowed us to occupy the Government House in the Fort. - where the accommodations were extremely spacious and handsome. - but the Air of which has been so injurious to our little Girl that we were at one time apprehensive of losing her. - She recovered immediately however on being taken down to Saugor Roads in a Pilot vessel. - and Dr. Wallich has since lent us his House in the Company's experimental garden at Tittyghur between Calcutta and Barrackpore, a delightful place and which agrees with her perfectly. The Fort, from closeness and other reasons connected with closeness is said to be often injurious to young and delicate persons: but without its rampart we would fain flatter ourselves. - even children may enjoy good health in this country and some years, at least, may elapse before we are compelled to send her to England. - Emily has continued well and is looking forward. - I trust with the best and most comfortable hopes, to her approaching confinement. - We have happily much confidence in our medical attendant, and the time of year is most favourable both to her recovery and the probable health of her infant. May God hear our prayers and those which it is one of my chief comforts to believe are offered for us by our dear friends in England! Pray offer our united love and best wishes to Mrs. Thornton and your children: also to your Family and hers. - God Almighty bless you!

Ever your affectionate Friend
Reginald Calcutta. -

Tittyghur January 9, - 1824

It was my intention, till lately to set out by Land for the Upper Provinces as soon as Emily and my children were able to travel, and to stay at Ghazeepoor a little on this side Benares during the hot winds. In this expectation, Archdeacon Corrie promised to accompany me. - but a reconsideration of all which I am doing and have to do at Calcutta has convinced me that I cannot be spared before the rains when also I hope for Corrie's company - The want of Episcopal visitation, Confirmation etc. in all these vast districts is said to be great and the more so since Bp M. never went there. Meantime if my wife and children are so well as to enable me to leave them with comfort, I meditate a shorter excursion of a few hundred miles only round by Dacca and Chittagong where also my presence may be very useful and is I understand much wished for. -

Adieu. -

Estimate of Reginald Heber

by

Catherine Stanley

"If ever there was a man of whom it might be said as of Nathanael, 'Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile', Reginald Heber was that man. In him was realised the simplicity and singleness of purpose brought before one's mind so perfectly by the description, 'Be ye as little children.' His was 'the charity which thinketh no evil, which vaunteth not itself, seeketh not her own, which rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things.' His mind seemed as completely unspotted from the world as a child's, and for the same reason: it seemed never to have come in contact with it. All his interests, pleasures, and pursuits lay so completely out of the sphere of worldly affairs, that he was as a being who had no concern in them. Any interest he might take was for the sake of others; any opinion he might give, as upon an abstract question in which he had no individual concern. He seemed positively not to know from his own experience the existence of evil passions, and the effect of this was that he could never be brought to believe in the evil designs or bad motives of others; and his errors, if errors he had, lay here - that he would extenuate and palliate beyond what a sense of right would tolerate. Yet here the motive was so evident that it could do no harm. No one could for an instant doubt his ardent love of virtue, because he was not vehement in his hatred of vice; his moral sense was keenly alive to everything great and good; his tribute of enthusiastic sympathy ever ready to burst out without regard to the prejudices and interests of party, which so often check its free expression in others. His perceptions seem to have been ever directed to the good of everything; and that superiority and love of excellence which makes other fastidious, only made him seek and consequently find the brighter side of every character and circumstance that came in his way. If ever he betrayed impatience it was under conversations carried on in a different spirit from this.

In matters of talent, as well as in moral character, the same disposition was equally remarkable. There was no company in which he was not equally desirous to please; none he appeared to think dull; no person to whom he did not both listen and address himself as if seeking to receive rather than

bestow information; and this not for effect or on principle, but from the pure simplicity of heart, which did in fact think humbly of itself. Of himself, indeed, he never seemed to think at all; in small and great things those around him were equally obliged to take heed for him; yet concerns gave way whenever the interests of others, either in public or private life, were concerned. In all the offices of active kindness which endear a minister to his parishioners, he yielded to none; he carried with him in his parochial visits the same spirit of seeking good of which we have already spoken; and all that he did and all that he said amongst them, came with the effect which ever attends on what is true and genuine. What comes from the heart goes to the heart with an instinctive force which knows no difference of person, time, or place; and this with his preaching.

The state of mind which is the object of the endeavours and aspirations of other Christians, seemed to be his by nature. Original sin displayed itself in him only in the imperfection, in the impossibility of combining all excellences, in the errors into which his virtues would lead. To many the imitation of his character would be impracticable. We cannot help seeing those dark spots in life to which he was so happily blind, but that his disposition was one of the most perfect with which human nature can be endowed, its close resemblance to the Christian character leaves us no doubt. It is self-evident also that the immediate fruits of it were a constant cheerfulness, enjoyment of present objects, content, and a freshness of mind on every subject. He was so completely unfettered and unwarped by extraneous matter that he seized upon the truth with a sort of intuition which carried instant conviction with it. There was no commonplace, no fear of being commonplace - no thinking as others had done before him, no rejection because they had thought it before; everything stood or fell with him by its own merits; and the enlarged views with which he thus entered on all subjects led to a liberality and candour as to all sects and parties which, while it gave offence to some zealous but more contracted minds, had the effect of conciliation in its broadest signification in the whole Christian world; and it is in this peculiar point of view that his loss is irreparable. Conciliation is usually the allotted task of lukewarm, mild, gentle spirits, whose incapacity

for great exertion is counterbalanced by their usefulness in this line;— but here it rested on a higher basis, here it was combined with the very zeal which usually carries it to the other extreme."

Quoted from
Memoirs of Edward and Catherine Stanley
pp.198-200.

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